

Class _____

Book _____



1

4596
4309

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

MARGARET T. APPLGARTH

7

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

BY

MARGARET T. APPLEGARTH

*Author of "More Short Missionary Plays," "Some Boys and
Girls in America," "India Inklings," "Lamplighters
Across the Sea," "Missionary Stories for
Little Folks," etc.*

NEW  YORK

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

BV2056
A5

COPYRIGHT, 1923,
BY GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

20

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS. II

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AUG 31 '23

©C1A759154

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

These little plays are sent forth in the hope that both those who give them and those who see them may catch new meanings in the missionary messages we have been hearing all our lives in stories and sermons and addresses. The plays are simple enough not to need many rehearsals nor to require much skill for their proper presentation: indeed, elocutionary gifts, as such, have been known to spoil the effect of many a missionary play, for the simple reason that a sincere attitude of mind "puts things across" with much more genuine force than the affectation of a passion which is merely assumed for effect. That does not mean that dramatic ability should not be used whenever available; it is merely to encourage those in the average church who have little skill, no training, but a true love for the great end in view!

Because we may not have gifted actors, there will be a valuable spiritual appeal in a well-selected familiar hymn which can drive home many a fine point and linger in the memory long after the spoken word is silent. Therefore, in almost every play, an appropriate hymn has been given to supplement the message of the play itself.

The matter of Oriental costumes is always rather staggering to the average society, but there are two

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

things to bear in mind: first, that your audience is not likely to know any more about the details of clothes worn in far eastern countries than you know yourself; therefore accuracy is not as essential as a good general effect; and second, a little ingenuity with bright materials and paint can work wonders, as the following suggestions will prove. For example:

India. A woman's sari requires about eight yards of uncut material, at least a yard wide. Use cheesecloth, muslin, or old curtains sewed end to end, lengthwise, and dyed in brilliant shades. The simplest way to get the desired draped effect is to pin a piece of goods around the waist for a belt, then hastily pleat one-half of the material into folds which are to be pinned on the belt to form the skirt; the remaining material may then be passed over the left hip, up under the right arm and over the left shoulder, bringing it around in front like a shawl with the end hanging loose. For all outdoor scenes this shawl effect should be brought up over the head as a covering.

This loose end is the part of a sari frequently decorated. Buy some Sapolin gold paint and a bottle of Higgin's Black Drawing Ink. Lay the end of the goods on a large piece of blotting paper and paint broad gold bands, outlined with narrow black borders. Or, for variety, paint circles, squares, triangles, flowers, Greek keys, etc., in brilliant water colors brought out tellingly with an occasional black border or row of black dots.

A round-necked waist with short sleeves should

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

be worn underneath. Use as many necklaces, bracelets, earrings and rings as possible.

Widows wear no ornaments; only a plain white sari.

In general, Hindu men and boys may be said to wear white coats, such as dentists or waiters wear, and white trousers—no collars or ties. A broad colored girdle may be pinned around the waist. Gorgeous turbans should be wound around their heads.

China. Loose black trousers and a kimono-sleeved jacket, long or short, may be worn by both men and women. Old blue is the most popular color in China, but purple, mahogany, and green are much used by adults and the gayest possible shades by children. The jackets are cut somewhat on the lines of the pajama jackets which fasten first at the neck and then under the right arm with frogs. It is possible to dye a pajama suit with some bright color and make it altogether Oriental by using plenty of gold paint in bands around the edges, with a few black markings to emphasize the gold. Dragons in gold on the front and back of such a coat would make it look really very valuable. It is possible to buy stencil patterns in art stores if you have not the courage to try a design free hand. Remember, always, that the audience is too far away to be critical of details.

For the men and boys make round black sateen caps, like skull caps, with a red ball sewed in the center of the crown. Queues are no longer worn by Chinese men or boys, but little girls indulge

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

in one and sometimes in three pigtails (even numbers are unlucky) braided to a fine point with red string worked in just for good luck. The Chinese stand with their hands tucked up the opposite sleeve, and in "shaking hands" merely elevate and lower their own superimposed hands against the fronts of their own jackets.

Japan. Kimonos with square wing-like sleeves are too familiar to need description; where they cannot be obtained, standard patterns may be bought from which pastel-colored crêpe kimonos may be cut. Only the children (and the geisha girls) wear the gaudy shades. Sashes can be tied in butterfly bows behind, but these are not nearly so correct as the stiffer and more formal effect gained by an oblong of the sash material looped perpendicularly across the sash in back, extending in an unbroken line from the shoulder blades to below the hips.

Korea. The girls and women may wear plain little white kimono-sleeve waists with a V neck, collarless, and either light or dark full-gathered skirts with waist-lines so high that the belts come directly under the arms and are tied in front with the narrow streamers of the bows hanging loose.

Moslem countries. Make a double skirt gathered at the waist line—one half to hang down to form the skirt, the other half to be brought up like a shawl over the head and shoulders. This is a very generalized description, of course, as Egyptian, Arabian, Persian and Turkish costumes all come under the category "Moslem." Plain black, plain

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

colored or flowered materials may be used; to gain the best effect black is suggested. Either a plain black or a plain white gauze veil should be drawn across the face just under the eyes and left to hang loose for about twelve inches.

Africa. The men may wear black tights, long black stockings and long black gloves to save blackening the hands and arms. Faces and necks should be blackened, but not with any comic effects. Girdles may be of three kinds—bright-colored pieces of material around the hips and thighs, or animal skins (fur stoles are excellent), or straw skirts made by sewing hay on a cloth girdle so that the bristling straws give a satisfactorily savage effect. Necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and large brass curtain-ring earrings are needed.

For the girls and women black waists with long tight sleeves, and several yards of gaudy material draped around the body under one arm and over the other shoulder. A complete description of a witch-doctor's outfit is given in the play called "Pain Street."

Spanish-American. A mantilla for the women and girls, with a flower in the hair (over the ears) of the latter. Full skirts and plain waists will answer the purpose well enough. For the men and boys, broad-brimmed straw sombreros which may be farmers' straw hats with red bands around the crowns. Collarless shirts, broad colored girdles, and either a black bolero jacket or a red blanket arranged in folds to hang straight down front and back over the left shoulder.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Immigrants. A shawl around the shoulders and a scarf tied over the head, knotted under the chin, will be sufficient costuming, unless otherwise indicated.

American Indians. Camp Fire Girl outfits may be used, and where these are not obtainable red blankets in Navajo patterns may be wrapped around the body. Feather head bands for the boys, and bead head bands for the girls if desired.

Alaskan. Fur coats may be used, with hoods fashioned from fur collars.

Costumes for rent. The Department of Missionary Education of the Baptist Board of Education (276 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.) has an equipment of over four hundred costumes, the rental privileges of which are extended to all denominations. The equipment includes Africa, American Indians, Arabia, Burma, China, Egypt, Eskimos, India, Japan, Korea, Palestine, Persia, the Philippines, Syria and Turkey, and has specialized types of costumes for artisans, beggars, brides, children, coolies, laborers, merchants, monks, officials, priests, school-teachers, village people, and the rich as well as the poor. Write to inquire the prices of the costumes you may need.

How to make an idol. A very realistic idol may be made from two sofa pillows of dark unfigured material. One pillow should be placed horizontally on a chair draped with red material to form a pedestal. Dent the pillows slightly in the side facing front as this will form the two knees; it may be well to tie a dark string loosely around

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

the pillow to keep this dent in place. The second pillow is to form the body. One generous corner of it will be the head after a piece of string has been tied tightly around it to make a neck; this makes a peaked cap effect at the top. With chalk mark in hair, eye-brows, and nose. For eyes make two big circles of white paper and pin them into the pillow with black-headed hatpins for pupils. Hideous sneering red lips may be made of red paper pinned in place with great white-headed pins set in a grim double row for teeth. Extra out-jutting ears should be the same color as the material. Since this head will naturally be upright, the two adjoining corners of the pillow become elbows; stuffed gloves should be fastened to the elbows. The remaining corner of this pillow must now be punched in and flattened so that the body of the idol may be securely pinned perpendicularly (or sewed) to the lower horizontal pillow. Votive necklaces, joss-sticks burning in twin vases before the shrine, and gongs will all add the final touches of idolatry. If the idol is placed on a cane-seated chair the lower pillow may be tied to the canes for security. In any case the upright pillow must be invisibly tied behind to the chair-back.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COLOR BLIND	17
<i>Boys and Girls in America</i>	
KIMONO	33
<i>Japan</i>	
THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD	51
<i>India</i>	
JUST SUPPOSE	61
<i>India</i>	
THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH	79
<i>China</i>	
SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE	97
<i>China</i>	
HANDS UP!	106
<i>Spanish-America</i>	
FARE, PLEASE	118
<i>New Americans</i>	
INDELIBLE	130
<i>Negroes</i>	
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE TELEPHONE	
BOOK	149
<i>Medical Missions</i>	
PAIN STREET	156
<i>Medical Missions</i>	

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

COLOR BLIND

IN THREE ACTS; TWENTY-TWO CHARACTERS; FOUR
PRINCIPAL SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Miss Tracy, *the artist.*

Mrs. Newton, *the mother in mourning.*

Marie, *the French maid.*

Seven or eight little fair-haired girls and boys
under seven years of age.

Issy, *a young girl—very small for her years how-
ever.*

Jaky, *her little seven-year-old brother.*

Her baby sister.

Children of all nationalities in America—Negro,
Chinese, Japanese, American Indian, Alaskan,
Mexican, and the so-called “New Americans”
in as distinctive costumes as possible—e.g.,
Italians in Roman-striped shawls, Russian boy
in smock, etc.

DIRECTIONS:

Arrange platform as an artist's studio, easel and
canvas in the foreground, all sorts of children's
pictures leaning against the wall. This same
scene throughout the play.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

ACT I

When the play opens the Artist is seen working on a canvas, holding a palette in her hand. She backs off occasionally holding her head on one side as she squints critically at the picture. Knocking is heard at the door. Artist goes to open it, palette still in hand.

Enter Mrs. Newton. [In deep mourning, heavy black veil over her face; lifting this veil back over her hat, she says:] You are Miss Tracy? The children's artist? I am Mrs. Newton, Mrs. Theodore Newton. Miss Tracy, I have come to talk about a picture which I hope you can paint for me.

Artist. [Putting down her palette and brush, pulls forward a chair.] Certainly, Mrs. Newton. Won't you be seated? *[They both sit down.]* What kind of a picture did you have in mind?

Mrs. Newton. [Holding a black-bordered handkerchief against her lips.] Miss Tracy, my husband and I have had a great sorrow—we—*[Stops to gain her self-control.]*

Artist. [Sympathetically.] Oh! I am so sorry—”

Mrs. Newton. It is so hard for me to speak of it, but we lost our little girl this year. She was just five years old. We have been wanting to do something—for her sake—as a memorial. You may have heard that the Church of the Redeemer is erecting a beautiful new building? Mr. Newton and I are members, and we want to have a me-

morial picture painted on the east wall—a mural painting, and we wondered if you would undertake the commission?

Artist. That is a wonderful honor, Mrs. Newton. I certainly appreciate it and I shall be very happy to undertake it. Have you any definite ideas for the picture?

Mrs. Newton. Yes; oh, yes! We want it to be a picture of little children around the throne of God. You know that lovely old hymn—"Around the throne of God in heaven, thousands of children stand"? We used to love to hear Angela sing it, and our idea is to use that as a theme for the picture. The building committee and the architects are enthusiastic about it; and it's because we know that you are an expert in children's pictures that we turn to you. Mr. Newton and I have only one condition: we do hope that you will use Angela's own little neighbors and playmates for the group of children. Their parents are very willing; indeed, many of them belong to our church so that it will be doubly appropriate to keep it within our own circle. The children themselves are exquisite little mortals.

Artist. Doubtless that could be arranged, Mrs. Newton.

Mrs. Newton. I don't want to be too insistent, Miss Tracy, but really we want *only* that special type of child—sweet little spirituelle faces—golden hair—

Artist. Of course, that is the type. I shall be glad to see these children soon; I wonder if you

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

could arrange for them to come here to-morrow morning. They ought to wear white.

Mrs. Newton. [*Clasping her hands.*] Yes, spotless white! They will look so lovely! [*Rising.*] Oh, Miss Tracy, I am so relieved that you can undertake it for us. I will see that the children arrive to-morrow. About ten?

Miss Tracy. Yes, about ten.

[*They shake hands. Mrs. Newton pulls her heavy veil forward over her face as she leaves the room.*]

Artist. [*Stands in the middle of the platform, her clasped hands held against her chin as, lost in thought, she stares off in space. Then nods, smiling:*] Yes, it's really a lovely idea! A great white throne with the Saviour and all those fragile aristocratic little creatures with their golden hair and their sweet little up-turned faces. Um'm! [*Nods slowly, retaining the faraway gaze.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

Same scene as before. Artist, wearing a painting smock, is seen putting a few last touches on an impromptu white throne, constructed from a small raised platform (made of several boxes the same height) and a high-backed cathedral chair, with several sheets arranged over the platform steps and the seat of the chair, possibly over the back also if the effect is good.

COLOR BLIND

[*Knocking is heard.*]

Artist. Here they are! [*Goes to the door and opens it.*]

[*Enter Marie, black-gowned, with a frilled wisp of a cap and apron; standing behind her are the seven or eight little children.*]

Marie. [*Gesticulating.*] Ees zis ze studio of ze Mam'selle Tracy where zese leetle enfants will have zeir picture paint?

Artist. [*Laughing.*] This is the place! Come in, my dears, come in! Let me help you take off your coats and hats.

[*Children enter, curtsying politely. Both Marie and the Artist busy themselves removing little coats, hats, and gloves. Marie then primly seats herself by the exit door, looking rather bored, yawning occasionally and batting the back of her hand against her lips to stifle the yawns. Finally nods off to sleep.*]

Artist. [*Meanwhile arranges children around the white throne.*] You see, I haven't had time to have a really wonderful throne made yet, but you can pretend that this is heaven, can't you? [*Children nod, spellbound.*] And that this chair is the beautiful white throne of God, can't you? [*Children nod.*] See, it is high and lifted up, and the glory of it fills all heaven. [*Children gaze at it enraptured.*]

One little girl. [*Climbs up the small raised platform and pats the chair seat experimentally; then says winsomely:*] I guess I'll just sit up on God's throne!

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Artist. [*Lifting her down.*] Oh, no, dear, that wouldn't do at all! For every one of you is to stand down here, only the Saviour Himself will be up on the big white marble throne while you sing to Him the special little song which you have been learning. Let me place you just the way I want you to stand, then I can start painting you. You stand here, dear, and you here. [*Artist poses the children around the throne, then hurries to her easel and starts sketching them rapidly.*] Perhaps you might sing your little song for me right now, will you?

[*Children sing:*]

“Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand,
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band, singing:
Glory! Glory! Glory be to God on high.”

[*They should repeat the last line softly as a refrain, almost in a whisper.*]

[*Artist draws as if inspired. Marie sleeps. Timid knock is heard. Artist too absorbed to notice it. Another knock. Artist still pays no attention. Marie still sleeps. Children all look over their shoulders toward the door. Third knock. Little girl now leaves her place in the group around the throne and tiptoes softly over to the Artist. Pulling her smock she says:*]

I think—I think there's some one knocking at the door of heaven! [*Points at the door.*]

COLOR BLIND

Artist. [*Turning, calls:*] Come in! Open the door and come right in.

[*Enter Issy, Jaky and the baby. Issy wears a drab shawl around her shoulders, a bright scarf (folded triangle-fashion) over her head, knotted under her chin, with the free corner hanging over the nape of her neck. Wears patched gingham dress. There are large holes in her stockings. Issy carries the baby all bundled up in another shawl and leads Jaky by the hand. He wears exceedingly shabby blue overalls with all sorts (and colors?) of patches sewed here and there. One suspender strap of the overalls is missing, but a piece of rope is substituted. The faces and hands of all three are very dirty. Jaky has the habit of rubbing his fist across his nose.*]

Issy. [*Setting the baby on the floor, pulls off Jaky's tattered cap and bobs a curtsy.*] Say, leddy, sooner my popper heard tell how you was painting a big pitcher of kids for going in the new church over there—[*Jerks her thumb over her shoulder.*]*—he says to me, says he, "Issy, I wants you should go mit little brudder und sister for getting painted into that there pitcher."* So here we comes, leddy.

Artist. But I think there must be some mistake, my dear; I don't understand at all. In the first place, who is your father?

Issy. [*Surprised.*] Why, don't you know *pop*? Well, *pop*'s the feller that totes the bricks up them stepladders for building steeples und udder high

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

up dang'rous places. Ain't you really never seen pop, leddy? Ain't you never seen him clumb them ladders all the same as most folks clumb stair-cases? Mit bricks on his shoulder, see? Like this! [*She imitates man with hod on his left shoulder, reaching higher and higher with his right hand, and pretending to step up, up, up.*] Why, say, I seen pop git most to heaven, leddy. Honest! Jaky's awful proud over pop's steeples, ain't you, Jaky? [*Grabs Jaky's right hand and says, rebukingly:*] Quit wiping your nose und speak up real nice and loud. Say "Yes, leddy."

Jaky. [*Furtively rubs his other fist across his nose, says meekly:*] Yes, leddy.

Artist. [*Much embarrassed.*] But, my dear child, I still don't quite seem to understand why you came, for I have all the models I need. [*She points at the group of children around the throne.*]

Issy. [*Abashed, points her thumb at that exquisite silent group.*] Them? But they ain't real live kids, is they? [*Artist nods. Issy cranes her neck toward them curiously.*] Say, leave me touch 'em, will you? [*Walks over and tiptoes all around them in sheer admiration, her head tilted appraisingly. Touches one or two of the little dresses gingerly. Then, coming back to the Artist, nudges her enthusiastically:*] Well, what do you know about that? Ain't they just puffikly schweet? Look, Jaky, just like leetle white angels already so soon, ain't they? [*Jaky jerks his head in a*

COLOR BLIND

solemn nod.] But Jaky, this ain't no place for me und you und beebee. [*Grabs his hand, and gathers the baby under one arm.*] Me und you und beebee's too dreadful dirty for getting painted into heaven, Jaky. So just look your fill. My! My! Ain't it puffikly lovely? [*Gazes admiringly at the children and then at the room. Says to Jaky, crossly:*] Quit wiping your nose, like I told you! Come now, let's beat it, or we'll muss up this grand place. Lift up your foots real high, Jaky, so you won't squash this swell rug. Don't it stick up something elegant?

Jaky. [*Leans down to stroke the rug gently.*] Like pussy-cats it feels, Issy!

Issy. [*Apologetically to Artist.*] Excuse him, leddy. He ain't used to heaven! Well, good-by. [*They step high on their way to the door. Opening it, Issy waves her hand warningly to those outside and yells loudly:*] Shoo! Shoo! Git back there!

Marie. [*Wakes up in alarm and jumps to her feet.*

Artist. [*Hurrying over.*] Who have you got outside?

Issy. Now please don't call the police on me, leddy,—it's just some kids I thought maybe you could use in your pitcher. I collected most every sort of kid in town, see?

Artist. [*Looking out the door.*] Well, I should think you did! Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, Italians, Russians, Turks, Greeks, Indians. But surely

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

you see that none of them would fit into my picture?

Issy. [*Soothingly.*] Oh, sure, sure! I see that! We ain't none of us cleaned up enough for being painted in heaven. Well, good-by. [*To children outside.*] Shoo-o-o! [*Swoops out at them.*]

Marie. [*Whose hands have been raised in perfect horror, now closes the door and says to her spellbound charges:*] Eef mam'selle permit, ze enfants must put on zeir zings an' go for zeir moosic lesson; yes?

Artist. Certainly, Marie; the time is up. Thank you, my dears, for standing so still and looking so bewitching. I will be painting on the picture all the time until you come again.

[*Artist and Marie assist the children to put on their coats and hats. Artist makes various remarks:*]

Did you like being in my picture, Percy? Be careful not to muss that pretty dress, Barbara.

Barbara. [*Smoothing her dress primly.*] It's a clean little dress. I always wear a clean little dress.

Other children. So do I! And I! And I!

Artist. Oh, I am sure you do! Well, good-by, my dears.

Children. [*Bobbing polite curtsies.*] Good-by, Miss Tracy. [*Exit.*]

Artist. [*Returns to the easel, takes up her palette and brush; regards her work critically through half-closed eyes, her head tilted:*] I certainly managed to catch the pose. Isn't this par-

COLOR BLIND

ticular little fellow a dream? And now for the white of their dear little dresses and the glint of their golden hair . . . [*Paints in silence. Then smiles.*] Weren't they startled when those comical little foreigners came bursting in? [*Smiles. Paints. Then sighs:*] Just the same, it nearly broke my heart to see their quaint wistfulness. But imagine having such as they in such a picture as *this!* [*Paints in silence. Behind the scenes the children are softly singing "Around the Throne of God in Heaven."*]

CURTAIN

ACT III

Same scene as before. The Artist may have all her speeches written on the canvas to aid her memory. Artist is seen before her easel painting. (Different smock, if possible.) Stands off to look at it thoughtfully, wooden end of paint-brush held against her lips. Shakes her head disapprovingly.

Artist. Something is certainly wrong. I never did a picture which pleases me so little. We have had eight sittings, yet I can't seem to make any progress. What in the world is the matter? It isn't the throne, for it's magnificent: high and lifted up, white, holy. And the face of the Saviour is radiant, so glorified, so tender. These angels

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

satisfy me, too—the lovely sheen of their silvery wings, the worship in their very pose. And, individually, each one of these darling little children around the throne seems to be perfectly portrayed. Yet *something* is wrong! Is it the face of the Saviour? Perhaps I should change the yearning look in His eyes. [*Starts to paint; stops, hand with paint-brush suspended in mid-air.*] No, somehow that expression seems to belong there. Oh, what is lacking? Where is the trouble? For something is certainly wrong! [*She picks up the big canvas, carries it to a chair, seats herself and props the canvas on her knee so that she can look at it earnestly.*]

[*Either the Artist or an unseen soloist should now sing (this hymn is in “Northfield Hymnal No. 2.”)*]

“Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hand the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit Divine.”

Artist. [*Yearningly.*] Ah, yes, open my eyes—open my eyes—

Voice. [*From behind the great white throne.*] Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

COLOR BLIND

Artist. [*Eagerly.*] But here they are in my picture, those little children!

Voice. God hath made of *one* blood *all* nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they might seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.

[*Enter the smallest of the little white-gowned children who posed in the second act. Tip-toeing slowly toward the throne she sings the refrain: "Singing, Glory! Glory! Glory be to God on High."* When she reaches the throne she leans over to rest either her elbows or her hands (it depends on her height, of course) on the seat as she silently gazes upward for a moment. Then turns and beckons toward the door to Jaky and Issy who are hesitating on the threshold. (Issy should have the baby balanced horizontally under one arm!) The little girl runs over to lead them to the throne, and standing between them—holding a hand of each she says:]

"If every little child could see
Our Saviour's loving face,
I'm sure that each one eagerly
Would run to His embrace."

[*A second little white-gowned child enters leading a Negro child and a Chinese child toward the throne. Turns, and says to the audience:*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

“Though black the hand, red, yellow, white,
All hearts are just the same,
Each one is precious in His sight,
Each one He calls by name.”

[Enter third little white-gowned child leading Alaskan and American Indian, followed by the others each leading two little foreigners; this third child says to the audience:]

“And those who hear in every land,
With loyal hearts and true,
Will grasp some little brother’s hand
And lead him onward, too.” *

[The children all group themselves around the throne, the Artist puts her canvas back on the easel and starts painting; it may be necessary for her to help the children group themselves attractively or to start them in their song, but otherwise she simply continues painting as one in an inspired trance while the children stand singing the verse and refrain of “Around the Throne of God in Heaven.”]

Voice. *[From behind the throne.]* It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

[The children now turn and, singing the refrain very, very softly, tiptoe from the platform, all

* Words of “Little Brother Hymn,” by Alfred R. Lincoln.

COLOR BLIND

but one little foreigner (choose the quaintest in the cast) who sits down contentedly on the lower step of the throne and refuses to leave, even when the others turn and beckon to her to come with them. She shakes her head and strokes the throne affectionately looking up beyond the seat as if she saw a beloved face. Issy, however, comes back and holds out her hand to the little girl who then jumps up quite willingly and leaves the platform. The Artist should continue painting throughout this little byplay.]

Artist. [Standing back to appraise her work.] Oh, Father, I thank Thee for opening my eyes! How color blind I was! [Points to her palette.] Red, yellow, brown, black, white, upon my palette, yet I used only white. Dear God, Thou dost not make heathen, Thou only makest—little children. They all are precious in Thy sight: these lovely yellow faces, like tender tea-rose petals; these dusky browns, like pansy faces; these rich deep reds, these deep soft blacks—how lovely! [Paints again in silence. Then lays down her palette and brush, clasps her hands and cries:] Finished! . . . Oh, I love it! I love it. [Prays.] Dear Father, keep all of us from ever being color blind again. Help each of us to see that since our country marches forward on the feet of little children, the colors are Thy rainbow of promise for the future of our country. Oh, Thou to whom all colors are alike, grant us to see the good in each

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

and to develop it, that Thy name may be hallowed,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on *earth*, as
it is in heaven. Amen.

CURTAIN

KIMONO

IN FIVE SHORT SCENES; TEN CHARACTERS; SIX
SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Miss Lucy Kimball

Mrs. Thurston.

Japanese mother.

Japanese baby, *a doll*.

Buddhist priest.

Missionary.

Japanese Bible woman.

Three or four little Japanese children.

INVITATIONS AND POSTER:

From odds and ends of bright-colored cardboard cut Japanese lanterns, painting the top and bottom rims black; punch a hole in the top rim so that the little lanterns may be hung (*à la Tag Day*) on the buttons of the prospective audience the Sunday before the play. In a column of six letters print the word K..I..M..O..N..O on one side of the lantern in red or black ink, using script that is as heavy and Japanese in character as possible. On the reverse side print the date, place, and price, if any.

Another invitation idea would be to mount pictures of pretty Japanese girls on cards, printing

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

the word "Kimono" in a column up and down the right hand side of the card. Interesting figures may be cut from Japanese crêpe paper napkins. These same figures can be used to decorate the poster, which may be cut out in the shape of a lantern and hung on the church bulletin board for a week or more before the program is to be presented.

DIRECTIONS:

For convenience, the play is divided into five scenes, but the time between the scenes need not be longer than one minute since all the necessary shifting of furniture is to be quite simple, as indicated.

The platform should contain, when the play opens: a table against a side wall, with a telephone on it; a sofa against the opposite wall.

It will be a great help to Miss Kimball to have her speeches for Scenes I and V open on the telephone table for ready reference. Mrs. Thurston may also do this.

SCENE I: Enter Miss Kimball, wearing hat, coat and gloves.

Miss Kimball. [Removing gloves and yawning.]
Mercy, I'm simply tired out! *[Telephone rings.]*
Oh, pshaw, who can that be? *[Picks up receiver.]*
Yes?

Mrs. Thurston. [Seated at the foot of the platform, at side furthest away from the telephone

KIMONO

which Miss Kimball uses. Another telephone is placed on a small table for her use:] Could I speak with Miss Lucy Kimball?

Miss Kimball. This is Miss Kimball speaking.

Mrs. Thurston. Oh! This is Mrs. Thurston at the [*mention your church*] Church. I'm such a new member that I think we have not met yet, but I hope we may have an opportunity to meet soon for I have been asked to get up a mission study course at the church for the next six Tuesday afternoons, and I am 'phoning to see whether you will join the class, Miss Kimball. The general topic is to be Japan. Isn't it perfectly wonderful that we have been able to secure Mrs. Early Pioneer to teach the first few lessons? She's a perfectly charming old soul, you know, and knows every inch of the country and has the most fascinating stories. You never want her to stop talking!

Miss Kimball. [*Exceedingly cool.*] But I really couldn't join the class, Mrs. Thurston.

Mrs. Thurston. Oh; not because of the day, I hope, for possibly that could be changed?

Miss Kimball. Oh, no, the *day* is all right.

Mrs. Thurston. [*Laughing.*] Meaning that something else *isn't* all right? Now do tell me, for you're such a good [*mention denomination*] church member that I really didn't trouble to lead up to my invitation very gracefully. I plunged straight to the point, so do forgive me if I haven't made it sound alluring enough.

Miss Kimball. Oh, there's nothing to forgive,

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

I assure you. It's simply that I think it's quite unnecessary to spend any time studying *Japan*. It's such a civilized country, you know. I have a cousin who spent several months traveling there last year and she says that except for kimonos and jinrikishas you'd almost think you were in San Francisco. Street-cars and telephones and fine hotels. Everything copied either from America or Germany.

Mrs. Thurston. Ah, yes, but have they copied the *best* that we have? Not with those thousands of Buddhist temples and those millions of Shinto shrines!

Miss Kimball. [*Vexed; impatiently tosses her head.*] Well, don't expect me to join a mission study class! I don't mind telling you frankly that I can't see any use in trying to cram our own particular brand of religion down everybody's throat. The Japanese have their own religion, and it's a very picturesque religion, I assure you. My cousin says the Buddhist temples are simply stunning, many of them; and after the people worship they stay in the temple grounds, quite happily, to have a good time. Evidently they are entirely contented with the gods they have. I don't remember to have heard much about their *clamoring* for anything else. So you'll please excuse me—I'm very busy just now—

Mrs. Thurston. Oh, but Miss Kimball! This isn't like you. You're a pillar of the [*mention name of church*] Church, and I had supposed—

Miss Kimball. I may be a pillar and still not

KIMONO

be so narrow-minded as you seem to require me to be! I can't imagine why I should try to turn the whole world into [*mention denomination*] s! Good-by. [*Hangs up receiver rather crossly. Takes off her hat, presses hand on forehead.*] I do declare, that woman has given me a perfectly blinding headache! I feel simply good for nothing. I'd better get right into my kimono and see if I can't sleep it off. [*Exit. Removes hat and coat as she goes.*]

Miss Kimball. [*Returns in kimono, tying sash around her waist. The kimono, of course, is to go over her dress. Presses her hands on her forehead.*] My head is simply splitting! I can't think what causes these headaches to come on so suddenly. It's good I still have one of those splendid powders Dr. Foster gave me. [*Takes powder.*] Now I'll probably feel better. [*Goes over to sofa and seats herself. Lifts up sleeve of kimono to admire it.*] This is all of Japan I'm interested in! Isn't it pretty? [*Lies down. All lights go out in auditorium and on platform. Or, if play is given in the daytime, a curtain is drawn across platform for a moment.*]

SCENE II: Remove telephone from table and cover table with a bright red cloth extending to the ground. Decorate the red cloth with gorgeous gold designs. Sapolin Gold Paint comes in cheap packages and is extremely effective when seen from a distance, with some black here and there to bring out the designs. Place

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

an idol on the table. If a good-sized image is not available it is quite possible to make an excellent imitation from two sofa pillows, as described in the opening chapter on "Costumes" (see Foreword). Place burning joss-sticks in twin bud-vases before the idol. All this can be done in a minute by one person, while somebody else is placing a pedestal in the middle of the platform with a basin of water on top and a small cup. Only a very little water should be in the basin. Somewhere against the back wall there should be a set of Japanese gongs, those inverted metal bowls commonly used in American families at meal-time. As the lights gradually come on for this scene (or just before the curtain is raised) these gongs should be heard booming, first softly then louder and louder. Whoever has struck them then hurries from the platform before the audience can see the scene.]

Miss Kimball. [Rising from the sofa, presses her hands against her forehead in despair.] Oh, my head! My head! What have I done that the gods should always be sending me this infliction? I have surely displeased them somehow. I will go to Binzuru, the God of Healing, and pray to be cured. [She crosses the platform to the pedestal, where she pretends to fill the palm of her hand with water which she quaffs, then rinses her mouth, head tilted back. Then she dips up actual water in the dipper and pours it over each hand. This should look like a much more copious purifi-

KIMONO

cation than it actually is,—for of course the less water, the better for the kimono! She then goes to the gong and strikes it several times slowly; after which she goes to the shrine of Binzuru, kneels before him and bends over three times until her forehead touches the floor. Rising, she rubs the idol's forehead and then her own forehead, repeating the operation many times, occasionally clapping her hands and obviously murmuring a prayer.]

[Enter Japanese mother, wearing kimono, broad sash around her waist, large baby doll strapped on her back. Such a doll can usually be rented—subject to breakage damages—from any local Japanese novelty shop. She carries an open Japanese paper parasol over her head. She goes over to the pedestal, closes parasol, dips up water in palm of her hand and goes through same rite of purification that Miss Kimball used, after which she, too, strikes the gong, then approaches the shrine. She kneels, bows head to the floor three times; then, rising, rubs idol's ear and baby's ear many times alternately. She lays a bunch of flowers before him.]

Miss Kimball. Your little baby is in trouble?

Mother. [Sighing.] Oh, the poor little pigeon! You would not think it to look at him, but my baby is deaf! Not a word has he ever heard! Not a sound! So every afternoon I bring him to Binzuru, the God of Healing. I rub Binzuru's ear and then my little pigeon's ear—it ought to

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

help him, don't you think so? But not yet—not yet.

[*Miss Kimball pats the baby, and pokes a finger at him enticingly as she tries to awaken his interest. Meanwhile, enter a poor little white-haired Japanese lady, bent nearly double with age. She wears a gray kimono with soft lavender sash. She hobbles in, using a cane, and goes through the same acts of purification as the others. Strikes the gong, then kneels before the shrine with painful stiffness. Rising, she rubs the idol's knees and then her own knees several times, alternately. When she is about to go she says to the two women who are still talking in pantomime:*]

Honorably pardon me—

[*Miss Kimball and the Japanese Mother turn to her politely, with a reverent inclination of their heads.*]

Old Lady. [In sad quavering voice.] Honorably pardon me for interrupting you, but can either of you suggest another god for me to visit? I come to beg Binzuru to cure my crippled knees, but I must be very displeasing in his sight for he never grants my prayer—

Japanese Mother. Oh, Venerably Aged One, how gladly would I direct you somewhere, but I, too, do not know where to go to pray for my little child. Indeed, I was just asking this honorable stranger, but she is in trouble, too.

Miss Kimball. [Sadly shaking her head.] Oh, isn't it sad that we cannot seem to please the

KIMONO

idols. I have given presents of gold and presents of silver—

Old Lady. [*As all three of them turn to walk off the platform.*] I'm an old, old woman, and all my life long I've been looking for a God-Who-Satisfies. I've been so hungry for him! But the idols seem to mock me, they seem to say: Here's an old women who is soon going to die. No use troubling with her—

Miss Kimball. [*Helping her to walk by supporting her arm.*] Maybe there is a God-Who-Satisfies. I am young, I will look for him, and if I find him I will surely let you know. [*Exit.*]

Japanese Mother. [*Calling after them.*] And let me know, too! Let me know, too! [*Exit.*]

[*Auditorium and platform again darkened; or else curtain falls.*]

SCENE III: *Instantly remove idol, joss-sticks, red scarf, pedestal, basin and dipper. Place table against rear wall of platform, arranging on it a number of rolls of wall-paper or any scrolls which will represent the sacred Buddhist writings. The round ends should face the audience. An ornate Japanese screen should be either behind this table or beside it, depending on the size and height of screen. Seated on the floor before it should be a Buddhist priest in a saffron yellow robe. Since he does not have to stand, this need not be a made costume but simply several yards of stiff and shiny yellow lining material arranged to look*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

like a kimono. If possible, decorate with gold paint brought out by black outlines. His head may be bald, an effect produced by a tight-fitting flesh-colored bathing cap. The palms of his hands are brought together, flat, with a rosary of brown beads hanging between them. As this scene begins, he is seen lost in meditation, eyes shut, murmuring over and over the name "Buddha! Buddha!" (softly).

Enter Miss Kimball. [Timidly approaches him, kneels before him and bows her head to the floor, before she says:] Oh, Venerable Abbot, may a miserable woman in great trouble dare to interrupt your meditations with her own burning questions?

Buddhist Priest. [Opens his eyes very, very slowly, his lips still moving in prayer. Then lowers his hands, and says with a resigned expression:] Woman, what is it?

Miss Kimball. Oh, sire, in health one thinks of cherry blossoms and the new-born freshness of the day. But I, alas, am full of pain and cannot help but dwell on death and the hereafter. I seek the God-Who-Satisfies. So I come to you in trouble. Condescend to tell me from your ancient sacred books of Buddha, what hope is there for sinful mortals when they die?

Buddhist Priest. [Slowly reaches behind him, selects one of the several dozen scrolls.] Woman, it is not given to the female mind to comprehend the whole of life, but listen while I tell you what

the Buddhist scriptures have to say about it. [*Unrolls scroll, and glancing at it occasionally to refresh his memory, says:*] For I read here that life is very much like a man walking through a field and meeting an angry elephant which begins to chase him. In his haste to escape, the man sees a large dry well with vines growing over it, so he takes hold of a vine and swings himself down into the well, still clinging to the vine. He looks up, and there is the angry elephant! He looks down, and there at the bottom of the well is a great snake with its mouth wide open ready to devour him as soon as the vine shall break. All around him in the well are beautiful flowers growing, but under such conditions he has no interest in flowers, for presently at the top of the well a little white mouse comes out and begins to gnaw away at the vine, while beneath him a little black mouse suddenly begins to gnaw away the lower end of the vine.

Miss Kimball. [*Shudders and covers her face with her hands while he is talking. When he has finished, she says:*] Oh, sire, that is a gruesome picture! Could you honorably deign to explain it to me?

Buddhist Priest. Woman, the great mad elephant represents *Fate*, which chases us each through life. The large snake at the bottom of the well is *Death*, to which each of us must come, sooner or later. The vine represents the *thread of life*; while the white and black mice represent *day* and *night* which gnaw unceasingly at our

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

thread of life. You see, therefore, what sheer folly it is to spend time in admiring mere flowers, with such a fate before you. The only hope, of course, is Buddha's noble Eight-fold Path, for unless one shuns the world what hope is there on dying except to be born again into some lower animal? Woman, I know of no words so satisfying in my religion as inaction, indifference and apathy. They are the only hope we have! [*He rolls up his scroll, replaces it. Picks up his beads, places them between the palms of his hands, closes his eyes and murmurs:*] Buddha! Buddha! Buddha! *etc.*

Miss Kimball. Satisfying?—Inaction! Indifference! Apathy! Our *only* hope. . . . Oh, miserable woman that I am, so full of sin, so soon to die and be an insect or a toad. Oh, that I knew where I might find true peace. [*Rising, bows reverently to the inattentive priest.*] There are four times ten thousand idols in Japan, which one will really satisfy me? How shall I ever know which shrine to visit? How dark life is with doubts, and fears, and pain! [*Exit, head bent over, resting chin on her clasped hands. Platform and auditorium darkened, or curtain down.*]

SCENE IV: *Remove Japanese screens, also scrolls.*

Place the table back in its original position against the side wall. It would be a splendid touch of local color if you could erect a good-sized torii before the exit, through which Miss Kimball could then go to her Shinto shrine.

KIMONO

This is not necessary, however, although it is quite possible to build one up from strips of stiff brown cardboard tacked on four clothes' props, two upright, and two horizontal.

When this scene opens Miss Kimball is just reaching in the sleeve of her kimono to remove a paper sin-bearer, in shape somewhat like a kimono with a head at the top; four inches.

Miss Kimball. [Looking at the paper earnestly.] Such a little piece of paper! And yet the Shinto priest assured me that my sins would certainly enter into it if I kept it these three days. [Holds it up, thus enabling the audience to see the shape.] My sin-bearer! At last the three days are over and I can take it to the priest with a piece of money so that he can safely transfer my sins . . . my sins! Oh, surely then I shall feel satisfied! [Exit.]

Missionary and Japanese Bible Woman (in kimono) who have been seated in the front row of the audience now rise and go up on the platform, with Bibles in their hands. They walk to the corner of the platform farthest from the exit where Miss Kimball just disappeared.]

Missionary. Umé San, if we hold a street service first it will be sure to attract some of the children and the grown-ups who pass by, so suppose you sing a hymn, my dear.

Bible Woman. [Sings to tune "Consolator" (Alma).]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

“Come, ye disconsolate, where’er ye languish,
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts,
Here tell your anguish;
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.”

[Enter group of little Japanese children (in gay kimonos and sashes); they flock through the doorway clapping their hands and skipping up and down with rapture:]

Oh, it’s the Sunday-school Lady! It’s the Sunday-school Lady! *[When they reach the Missionary they each bow far over until their heads almost touch the floor.]*

[Miss Kimball also enters, wiping her eyes.]

Missionary. *[Nods to the children, patting them on their heads or shoulders.]* Umé San will tell you a Jesus-story, my dears, so you all go inside the chapel with her while I speak to this lady over here.

[Exit Bible Woman and children.]

Missionary. *[To Miss Kimball.]* Honorably pardon me, but perhaps there is something I can do for you—I cannot help noticing that you are in trouble.

Miss Kimball. Ah, yes, I am a miserable woman indeed, just when I hoped to be happiest. For this is the day in June when pious Shintoists may lose their sins. So to-day I, too, took my little paper sin-bearer to the Shinto priest. I gave him a coin so that he could surely transfer all my sins into it, and then I watched him throw the little paper

KIMONO

in the river. Oh, Excellency, when I saw the little blue waves come lapping at it I was so thrilled! I almost shouted! "Hurry! Hurry! Have you no swift current to bear away little pieces of paper forever and forever!" And then the current *did* suck it in—away it swirled and eddied, away and away and away it floated until it was clear out of sight. But I, who had expected to be so happy, am the same poor hopeless woman. Listen—what is that?

[*Bible Woman and children stand in doorway singing second verse of hymn:*]

"Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying
'Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.'"

Miss Kimball. [Clutching the Missionary's arm.] Did you hear that? Can it be true? A Comforter?

Missionary. Oh, a thousand times true! Have you never heard of the Saviour? Our Christian Bible tells about Him; and if you had known, surely you would not have used a little paper sin-bearer, for listen to this: [*Opens Bible at I Peter 2.*] "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

Miss Kimball. His own self bare my sins? To heal *me*? Oh, I have been hungry for this! He

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

must be the God-Who-Satisfies. Tell me, how long have you known about Him?

Missionary. All my life—ever since I was a little girl.

Miss Kimball. Then why didn't you come sooner? Why, I might have *died* without this comfort you have honorably brought me now. Why haven't I heard all this long, long ago?

Missionary. Ah, I wanted to come! But there was no money to send me. Too many people in my home country kept saying to me that you had your own gods, that you were satisfied with *them*—

Miss Kimball. [*Bitterly, her hands clasped in anguish.*] Satisfied? *Satisfied?* With idols of cold polished brass? With gods carved from tree trunks? Satisfied? Oh, what were your friends thinking of? I have hungered and thirsted for peace like this all my life.

[*Bible Woman and children sing third verse:*]

“Here see the Bread of Life, see waters flowing
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above;
Come to the feast of love, come, ever knowing
Earth has no sorrow but heaven can remove.”

Missionary. [*Linking her arm in Miss Kimball's.*] Come! [*Exit. Auditorium darkened; or, curtain falls.*]

SCENE V: *Torii removed. Telephone replaced on table as in Scene I. Miss Kimball asleep on her sofa, as before.*]

KIMONO

Miss Kimball. [*Awakes. Sits up. Looks around in a dazed sort of fashion.*] But where is the missionary? Where are all those cunning children? [*Arises and hurries across the room, searching. Then looks at the watch suspended around her neck.*] Only ten minutes since I lay down? Impossible! [*Holds watch against her ear to see if it is still going.*] Then I must have been dreaming—and yet it was all too dreadfully real! I was too unhappy. . . . *Unhappy?* Ah, yes, unhappy indeed. [*Miss Kimball then goes to the telephone.*] Central, please give me the —— Church. Hello, Hello. Is Mrs. Thurston still there? Oh, Mrs. Thurston, this is Lucy Kimball again. I just wanted to say that I shall be very glad to join your mission study class, after all.

Mrs. Thurston. You will? Oh, that's perfectly splendid. I'm so glad you've changed your mind.

Miss Kimball. Oh, yes, I've changed it, all right. I think I owe it to myself to say that I even take back all I said before—about not believing in missions, you know. And about the idols of the Japanese being good enough for them. For it isn't so, Mrs. Thurston, it isn't so!

Mrs. Thurston. Of course it isn't! But I'd just love to know what made you change your mind within less than fifteen minutes, Miss Kimball!

Miss Kimball. [*Hesitates, fingering her kimono with her spare hand.*] Well, I think maybe it was actually *living* inside a kimono for a little while! It makes all the difference in the world, you see. I suddenly knew just how it felt. And Mrs.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Thurston, when we have our first meeting, could we please sing hymn number—[*mention actual number in your hymnal.*] It seems to me so peculiarly appropriate to a study of Shintoism? Good-by until Tuesday.

Mrs. Thurston. [*Puts down the telephone. Rises and says to audience:*] May we not close our meeting by singing it now together, softly, "I Lay My Sins on Jesus." Hymn number —? I think it will show to each of us the blessings which we, too, have been taking for granted. All three verses, please. [*Tune, "Elim" or "Wellesley."*]

CURTAIN

THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD

IN ONE SCENE, LAID IN INDIA; SEVENTEEN CHARACTERS; SIX PRINCIPAL SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Bible Woman.

Missionary.

Two Hindu boys, *eight or nine years old*.

Sugunamma, *an Indian woman convert*.

Pitchaya, *her husband*.

Old white-haired convert (*man*).

Little girl, *widow*.

Group of nine or ten Hindus.

DIRECTIONS:

A few palms and ferns of varying sizes should be seen in front of a tent arranged at the back of the platform, in a diagonal position. A movable blackboard on castors (or one of those movable frameworks with hooks used as coat racks in churches) will make an excellent "backbone" for this tent, with two sheets sewed together for the sides,—the seam to be fastened with thumb-tacks along the top of the blackboard, after which the sheets are to be stretched out as taut as possible to form the tent sides. Fasten the ends with twine, of course; heavy irons may be used as weights to which these ends are tied.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

As the play opens, the Bible Woman (draped in a white sari) comes out of the tent carrying a folded camp stool, which she takes to one side of the platform and opens. Returning to the tent, she reaches inside and lifts out a small Victor talking-machine; carries it over and places it on the camp stool. Disappears inside of tent.

[Two small Hindu boys (brown stockings, no shoes, white trousers, white collarless shirts, one boy with broad red girdle, other boy with broad yellow girdle, each with big white turban) who have been sitting on the front seat with the audience, now climb the platform steps and tiptoe near the Victor machine, evidently nervous. Frequently stop and start to retreat, then proceed. First Hindu Boy is ahead, turns to look back at Second Hindu Boy and beckons with his elbow: "Hurry up!" Bible Woman makes a slight noise inside the tent; both boys scamper frantically back to the platform steps. Second Boy gets all the way down to the floor of auditorium; First Boy, braver, turns to look back. Seeing nobody, he hisses at his chum below.]

First Boy. 'Sst! 'Sst! Come on—it's safe!

[Second Boy climbs the steps and very gingerly ventures back to the Victor machine after the First Boy. With rapt curiosity they tiptoe in a complete circle around the machine, their hands behind their backs, their necks craned forward.]

THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD

First Boy. [*Shaking his head, dubiously.*] Queer thing, isn't it?

Second Boy. [*Scratching his head, nonplussed.*] But what is it—the white woman's idol?

First Boy. Oh, no, I don't think it's an idol. But I tell you what I think it is. I think it's the white woman's *husband*! She keeps him hidden in that little box.

Second Boy. [*Startled, retreats a foot or two.*] Mercy on us, her *husband*? But how do you know? He must be a very *little* man!

First Boy. [*Nodding his head wisely.*] Well, he may be very *little*, but he has a perfectly enormous voice. Just wait till you hear him sing. He's a very obliging person; he doesn't seem to mind being cooped up in a little box, for just as soon as the white woman feeds him something on a round black plate he begins singing and singing and singing. You wait!

[*Both boys retreat to the platform steps where they sit down. Bible Woman comes out of the tent carrying large colored Sunday-school wall scroll. Unrolls it and hangs it on a nail projecting from the end of blackboard inside tent. Missionary also comes out of the tent carrying a black Victor record. Any inappropriate record will do, provided it is sung by a man's voice.*]

Missionary. Time to start the music?

Bible Woman. Yes, Amma, it always helps to draw the crowd!

Missionary. [*Looking down at the record in*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

her hand.] This is the last record left. These trips in the bullock cart have been so jolting and rough that all my really nice discs have been broken. I must write home to America for some new ones, for I wonder what the members of my church in America would think if they knew that when I go touring I have to start evangelistic services with [*mention name of record*]! The good deacons would simply faint! [*Puts record on the machine, and winds it.*]

Bible Woman. But none of us speak English, Amma, so who will ever know what the words say?

Missionary. Ah, luckily! Luckily! Well, here goes. [*Starts noisy music. Screws up her face to show distaste, and laughingly covers her ears.*]

[*The two boys on the steps have been nudging and pointing ever since the Missionary came out of the tent with the record; but now, from sheer excitement, they jump up and begin clapping their hands. Missionary sees them and beckons enticingly, walking over toward them. Both boys, terrified, retreat down the steps to the floor of auditorium! While record is playing various Hindus come sauntering down the church aisles, and go up on the platform. Other Hindus enter by door on platform. The missionary greets them; they all salaam to her (touch hand to forehead, bowing) and then seat themselves on the floor, children in front, men next, women in the rear. A few women standing in rear. A few men, curious but aloof, remain by entrance*

THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD

door. (*The men may be dressed according to directions for the small Hindu boys.*) The two boys cautiously join the crowd. When the record is finished, the Bible Woman sings: "I Love to Tell the Story."]

Missionary. I am glad to see so many of you here to-night, for I have come all the long way from America to bring you good news. I wonder, haven't you ever been hungry in your heart of hearts for a God of Love?

[*Everybody in the crowd nods; here and there a few of them murmur:*]

Oh, yes, mem-sahib.

Woman in Rear. [*Pointing.*] Mem-sahib, don't those shoes hurt your feet?

Missionary. [*Pays no attention to this interruption.*] Last night I told you about the life of Jesus Christ, and all day long I have been talking with many of you in your homes about this God of Love. But to-night I want you to hear how this same Jesus has brought peace and gladness into the hearts of all who serve Him. Sugunamma, won't you come forward and speak first?

[*As Sugunamma is making her way from the back of the crowd toward the front, a woman says to her neighbor, pointing at the missionary:*]

I never saw a white woman before. You don't suppose she's white all over, do you?

Other Woman. [*Scornfully.*] Simpleton that you are, of course not! Could she live if she were white all over? Just her face and neck and hands

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

are white. They bleached in the hot sun, of course. That's what comes of traveling around in bullock carts instead of staying at home.

First Woman. Poor thing! And she seems so nice!

Other Woman. 'Sh! Sugunamma is speaking.

Sugunamma. Amma has asked me to tell you my history. Some of you know it, because I have always lived in this town. Well, one day I was kneeling in the door yard grinding the grain for the evening meal when suddenly a woman stood beside me and said: "I have come to bring you Jesus." But wasn't I foolish? I said: "Go away, I am too busy. My husband will soon be coming for supper. I have no time for any Jesus." But she did not go away. She talked to me while I prepared the meal, and every word she said was a little bit of heaven to me. For I never had a heaven before! What Hindu woman who does not know that when she dies the gods will send her back to earth to be reborn as some animal? Well, when I found out that Jesus had made a Town of God for women too, I said: "I want to get down into this new religion." And I did get down. But my husband did not like it. Why should he? For he was a maker of idols. All day he sat and carved a piece of wood with a knife. He did not like to hear that anybody worshiped a God who could neither be seen nor handled. Again and again he beat me until I was covered with bruises. He said I was never to mention the name of Jesus again. He burned my Bible. But he could not

THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD

burn the new peace in my heart. [*Puts hand on heart.*] The name of Jesus was written there, and I sang Jesus songs as I worked. So by and by when he saw how truly happy I was, he stopped hitting me and asked questions. Then he, too, became a Christian. There he is now, you can see him for yourself. [*She points to one of the men standing by the door. The entire crowd turns to look. One or two of them whisper about him.*]

Missionary. Pitchaya, haven't you something to say for yourself? Sugunamma has just told how she became a Christian.

Pitchaya. [*Comes forward, touching his right hand against his forehead.*] Salaam, Amma, did Sugunamma tell how blind I was at first? Although I think I always knew as I carved my wooden idols that they were just sticks of wood: I could *make* them! I could *burn* them! So how could they really save me, if they could not save themselves? Yet the blindness that I had, our Hindu neighbors also had when I finally turned Christian. They were furious at me for daring to break caste. They threw mud at me when I walked in the streets. They would not sell me food in the bazaar. They poisoned the water in our water jars. We knew what it was to be hungry and thirsty for weeks at a time; for my only trade was carving images, so how else could I earn a living? Our neighbors grew more fanatic; they burned my house to the ground. No man would speak to me. I was homeless and friendless and

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

hungry; yet I remembered that when Jesus was here among men, He often had no place to lay *His* head, either, and I was happy. I was *very* happy! Now was that not strange? But it was God's peace in my heart. I went out where the outcastes lived. I built a little mud hut. I white-washed it. I lived with those outcastes whom I used to despise. I told them about God's peace. Several of them white-washed their little huts, too. They had never been happy, yet now they *were* happy. All I did was to tell them about Jesus, and they listened.

Old Man. [*Gets to his feet.*] I am one of the men whom Pitchaya told. All my life I had been climbing high mountains hoping to find peace like the peace that Jesus gives. All my life I had been traveling to shrines and kneeling before the idols and bathing in sacred rivers seeking this same peace. Curious! One day I was an old, old man, discouraged and down-hearted. The next day, Pitchaya brought me peace. It is like that always, when you get down into this religion.

Several others nod. Yes, Yes! That is true!

Missionary. Won't those of you who know the Saviour come here to stand beside us, as Christian witnesses to the gospel?

[*Two or three come forward to join the group composed of the Missionary, Bible Woman, Sugunamma, Pitchaya, Old Man.*]

Little Girl. [*In rear, springs to her feet.*] Oh, Amma, can I come? Can I come? I am the little widow, Amma, but I do love Jesus dearly!

THE LATEST VICTOR RECORD

Missionary. [*Holding out her hands.*] It was
for such as you the Saviour died! Come, dear!

[*The little widow joins the group standing.*
They all sing to tune "Stephanos":]

1. "Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distressed?
'Come to me,' saith One, 'and coming
Be at rest.' "

[*The remaining verses are to be sung as a ques-
tion from the crowd, and an answer from the
group of Christians. If possible have a dif-
ferent Hindu to sing the question part of each
verse; otherwise, one Hindu singer may sing
the first two lines, the Christians always sing-
ing the last two lines.*]

Hindu. 2. "Hath He marks to lead me to
Him
If He be my guide?"

Christians. "In His feet and hands are
wound-prints,
And His side."

Hindu. 3. "Is there diadem, as monarch,
Which His brow adorns?"

Christians. "Yea, a crown in very surety,
But of thorns."

Hindu. 4. "If I find Him, if I follow,
What His guerdon here?"

Christians. "Many a sorrow, many a labor,
Many a tear."

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Hindu. 5. "If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?"

Christians. "Not till earth, and not till
heaven
Pass away."

Hindu. 6. "Finding, following, keeping,
struggling,
Is He sure to bless?"

Christians. "Saints, apostles, prophets, mar-
tyrs,
Answer 'Yes!' "

Missionary. [*Praying.*] Oh, thou great Father of us all, here are Thy human victor records, singing everywhere in India the riches of life in Christ Jesus. Have they not overcome persecution and fire and sword for Thy sake? Have they not come out more than victors? Oh, grant that wherever there may be questioning troubled hearts in India to-night, right there may be some child of Thine to answer: "Yes, oh, yes, finding, following, keeping, struggling, He is sure to bless." Watch over us as we go to our homes, and grant us each rest and strength to do one more day's work for Jesus. Amen.

[*As she says the words, "one more day's work," a violin, or a piano, should very, very softly play through the tune of "One More Day's Work for Jesus," just once.*]

CURTAIN

JUST SUPPOSE

ONE SCENE, GIVING FOUR EPISODES IN INDIA; TEN
CHARACTERS; TEN SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

American Mother.

Alice, *her oldest daughter, fifteen years old.*

Dorothy, *another daughter, eleven years old.*

Tom, *her son, nine years old.*

Mary Louise, *her youngest daughter, six years old.*

Hindu mother.

Hindu aunt.

First Hindu woman.

Second Hindu woman.

Third Hindu woman.

DIRECTIONS:

In the latter half of this play a double-panel effect is to be secured, the American mother reading in her chair at one side of the platform while her children, as Hindus, enact various scenes in India at the opposite side of the platform as she faces them. Therefore arrange a library table on whichever side is furthest from the exit door, with a rocking chair beside it for the mother, and two other chairs for Dorothy and Tom. A softly shaded electric lamp should give the only light on the platform. There need be no change of scene

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

for India, but (1) have several brass bowls against the walls in readiness for the Hindu family to beat, (2) have a screen to cover an immense Hindu idol on a table. See first chapter on costumes for directions for making an idol.

When the play opens the American mother is in the rocking-chair, mending stockings. Tom sits with his elbows on the table, studying a geography held propped before him. Dorothy is curled up in her armchair reading a story-book. Both children may have their speeches secreted in their books to refresh their memories, their mother may have hers hidden in a work basket.

Tom. [*Tilting the propped geography against his coat as he recites from memory:*] Let's see now—India is bounded on the east by the Bay of Bengal, on the north by Tibet and Afghanistan, on the west by Baluchistan and the Arabian Sea, on the south by the Indian Ocean. Population, three hundred and fifteen millions. [*Sneezes. Lays geography flat on the table; uses his handkerchief. Then continues:*] Where was I, now? Oh, yes, the principal cities are Madras, Bombay and Calcutta . . . Madras, Bombay, Calcut—
[*Sneezes. Again gets out his handkerchief.*]

Mother. [*Puts down her mending.*] Tom, are you catching cold?

Tom. [*Shaking his head vigorously.*] No, mother; honest Injun! But it's enough to make a fellow sick to see Dorothy there reading a *story-book* while I'm here studying my very head off! Huh!

JUST SUPPOSE

Dorothy. [*Calmly turning a page.*] Well, if I got all my lessons this afternoon, why *not*?

Tom. [*Glancing daggers at her.*] And the principal rivers are the Ganges and— [*Sneezes.*]

Mother. Really, Tom, you must be catching cold. [*Then, seeing Alice enter in hat and coat with books in her arms.*] Why, Alice, where are you going, dear?

Alice. [*Putting on her gloves.*] It's our girl's missionary meeting at the church, mother, don't you remember?

Mother. Alice, this has got to stop! You're out every single night—parties, movies, concerts, and now the church. It's got to stop. I want you to take off your hat and coat at once.

Alice. But, mother dear, it's Friday night; there's no school to-morrow, and you *wanted* me to go to the concert with you. You said it was educational! And this meeting is educational, too. It's all about India to-night, and I'm afraid I'll really have to go because I promised to give one of the principal papers. It's on the little widows of India. Oh, mother, surely you remember that we always, always, always, meet at the church on the first Friday evening of every month. It's only from seven-thirty to eight-thirty, and I'll hurry home right afterwards; but I really don't see how I can disappoint the leader this time when I'm one of her principal speakers. It wouldn't be India if nobody told about the *widows*—

Mother. [*Laughing.*] Widows? Well, really, Alice, I should think they would get somebody

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

older to discuss such a topic! I suppose you will have to go this time, if they are counting on you, but I must say I think they ought to grade the material to suit the ages of the members. You and widows, indeed!

Alice. But, mother, those widows are just tiny girls, lots younger than I am. Why, millions and millions of girls in India marry when they are years younger than I am!

Mother. [*Severely.*] Really, Alice, how often must I warn you against exaggerating merely to prove your point. You are only fifteen, my dear, so you had better not go to your meeting and announce that India is full of millions of little wives and widows younger than you. The other girls will begin to doubt the rest of the things you say, too.

Alice. [*Pulls a paper out of her coat pocket.*] But that's the truth, mother. Didn't you honestly know it before? Here are the statistics which I copied from one of the latest books on India—of course, I'm not going to *read* these figures at the meeting, I'm going to drape myself in some colored cheesecloth and pretend to be a little girl widow myself, telling my life story and just work in the statistics casually, but the fact is that there are 2,500,000 girls married under ten years of age.

Tom. Why, that's as many people as are in Chicago, if I remember rightly.

Dorothy. Oh, mother, just suppose Chicago was entirely made up of those little Hindu girl wives under ten years old—wouldn't it be a queer sight?

JUST SUPPOSE

Alice. And that's not the worst of it, for about 150,000 of those girls are widows under ten years of age!

Tom. Let's see now, what city has 150,000 inhabitants? I'm sort of shaky on populations, but I *think* that Troy is about that size.

Dorothy. Just suppose Troy was all widows! Wouldn't it be dreadful?

Alice. [*Consulting her paper.*] And 19,500 of them would be under five years of age. It's horrid to think of it, isn't it?

Mother. It certainly is! And now, dearest, since you've pledged yourself to be at that meeting you'd better run along, for it's getting late; but before you go I want to say, very definitely, that I don't think you have any business getting yourself all worked up trying to settle things on the other side of the world which really don't concern you at all. India is India, and America is America. So from now on I can't allow you to spend so much time on these unimportant details when there's your schoolwork to be done and your music to be practiced.

Alice. [*Kissing her good-by.*] But, mother, just suppose I was one of those girl widows myself. It wouldn't seem so unimportant then, would it?

Mother. Nonsense, child! Don't grow emotional over such absurd suppositions. Hurry along now. We'll finish this conversation when you get back.

Alice. [*Putting her books on the table.*] I

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

think I won't need my books, after all. I know them by heart. Good-by! [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Mary Louise in pajamas. Opens mouth in wide yawns, stretching her arms sleepily.*]

Mummy, I guess you just forgot all about me, so here I come to say my prayers.

Mother. [*Holding out her arms.*] My precious little Mary Louise! You aren't even buttoned up quite right, darling. [*Re-buttons the pajamas.*]

Mary Louise. [*Kneeling at her mother's knee.*]

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take,
And this I ask for Jesus' sake. Amen.”

Mary Louise. [*Starts to get up, then kneels again, adding:*] And, oh, Jesus, won't you please bless every single one of those little brown children in India to-night? Amen.

Mother. [*Holding Mary Louise in her arms to kiss her.*] India! India! India! what's struck my family to-night, anyhow? First Tom, then Alice, then you!

Mary Louise. [*Kisses Tom and Dorothy.*] Alice told me about how little brown girls like me worship idols, Mummy. Horrid big wooden idols.

Mother. [*Gathering Mary Louise's hand in hers.*] Poor Alice certainly has India on the brain. Come, dear, we'll go to bed now. [*Exit.*]

[*Tom sneezes.*]

JUST SUPPOSE

Dorothy. Tom, you *are* catching cold!

Tom. [*Wiping his nose.*] Oh, forget it, Dot! What's a little thing like a cold when I've got the most awful big tummy ache and don't dare tell mother! [*Rubs stomach and groans tragically; looks significantly at Dorothy as he says the comical word:*] Jam!

Dorothy. [*With a superior smile.*] Boys have so little sense!

Tom. [*Groaning miserably.*] Thank you for your loving sympathy! 'Sh! [*Studies.*]

[*Enter Mother. Resumes her sewing.*]

Dorothy. [*Looking up from her book.*] Mother, what does tro-us-see-oh mean?

Mother. Tro-us-see-oh? Why, I never heard of it, dear; spell it.

Dorothy. It's here in my story, though! T-r-o-u-s-s-e-a-u.

Mother. [*Laughing.*] Oh, trousseau! That means the new linens and clothes that a bride gets before her wedding.

Dorothy. [*Closing her book.*] Do you suppose those little brown girl-brides in India have new trousseaux, too?

[*Tom sneezes.*]

Mother. Tom, you certainly *have* a cold! Come here this minute and let me look at your throat.

Tom. Oh, mother, my throat's all right! but say, my tummy—

Mother. [*Significantly.*] Jam?

[*Tom nodding dismally and rubbing his stomach.*]

Mother. [*Rising.*] You're old enough to know

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

better, Tom! But since you will eat the wrong things, at least you know what medicine to take. A good night's sleep afterward, and you'll be a wiser boy by morning, I hope. Come on!

[Exit Mother and Tom. Tom makes a wry face over his shoulder at Dorothy.]

Dorothy. [Closes her book, rising.] I might as well go upstairs, too. *[Exit.]*

[Enter Mother, picks up Alice's books from the table, reading the titles aloud:]

"India Awakening," by Sherwood Eddy; "Building with India," by Dr. Fleming; "Things as They Are," by Lucy Carmichael. I'll just look this last book over while I wait for Alice to come home. I shall certainly have to reason with poor Alice; it's all wrong for her to take that mission club so seriously. *[Reads in silence. Occasionally clucks her tongue in sheer dismay as she turns the pages.]* Oh, surely this can't be true! Why, just suppose it were my own little Mary Louise.

[As she reads, there is enacted:]

EPISODE I

[Enter Hindu Mother draped in a lavender cheesecloth sari; she moves aside the screen which conceals the idol. Behind the scenes a bronze dinner gong is being struck sonorously. Mother beckons to little Mary Louise, who enters draped in a bright-blue cheesecloth sari.]

JUST SUPPOSE

Come, little one, do you not hear the priest booming the temple bell to awaken the idol for you? So come and kneel at once before the idol, and loop your marigolds around his neck.

Mary Louise. [*Carrying long garland of yellow flowers, backs away from the idol in great fear, shaking her head and crying:*] No! No! I'm afraid of him, mother!

Hindu Mother. [*Shaking the child's shoulder crossly.*] You stupid little idiot! Give the idol your marigolds this minute! Don't you see his big cross eyes and his strong cruel hands? Who knows what he may do to us if we forget to worship him? And how is your precious little brother ever going to get well if we do not make the idol feel more kindly disposed to us? Come, do as I tell you. [*Gives her a shove toward the idol.*]

[*Mary Louise drops the garland in terror and, turning, runs toward her American Mother, who drops her book in her lap, holding out her arms crying:*] Oh, my little Mary Louise! My little Mary Louise!

Hindu Mother. [*Catches Mary Louise by the elbow before she gets far across the platform, and drags her back to the idol.*] Now here's the wreath, you naughty girl. Loop it around the idol's neck quickly. [*Mary Louise obeys, sobbing in terror.*] Now kneel at his feet and repeat your prayer: "Oh, thou great all-powerful one" [*Mary Louise repeats*] "deign to make my poor brother well." Now bow your head way over to the ground in worship, three times. Now you can get up, for

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

that's all any mortal can do to please the gods. And for mercy's sake stop your sobbing; there's nothing to cry about, anyhow. [*Shakes the child crossly, and leads her by the hand from the platform.*]

[*Enter Hindu Woman to replace screen around the idol shrine. Exit.*]

American Mother. [*Breathing quickly and excitedly, holds her clenched hands against her lips as if she could not believe her eyes.*] Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image—thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor worship them—oh, my poor little Mary Louise! [*Picks up her book again and reads in silence, pursing her lips in disapproval as she turns the pages.*] What perfect ignorance! Oh, the very idea! Just suppose it were my Tom!

EPISODE II

[*Enter Hindu Mother and Hindu Aunt, carrying Tom, one holding his shoulders, the other his feet. Tom wears a turban on his head, white trousers and white collarless shirt, broad red girdle around his waist, brown stockings, no shoes. They lay him on the floor.*]

Hindu Mother. Oh, precious Apple-of-My-Eye, what ails thee? Have we not been to the temple and asked the idol to restore thee?

Hindu Aunt. He has an evil spirit in him and

JUST SUPPOSE

the only thing to do is to frighten it away by noise. So let us beat these brass jars as loudly as we can. [*She brings over the brass bowls which have been standing against the wall, and begins clashing two of them together while the mother also clashes two, until the din is terrific.*]

[*Tom rolls over groaning, rubbing his stomach.*

American Mother covers her ears and closes her eyes in great distress.]

Hindu Mother. [*Putting her jars on the floor, anxiously feels Tom's forehead.*] Alas! Alas! He is worse.

Hindu Aunt. Then perhaps we had better try to shake out the evil spirit.

[*Hindu Mother begins shaking Tom by the shoulders, until she stops from apparent exhaustion. The Aunt continues the treatment, Tom groaning and moaning.*]

Hindu Aunt. It must be a very stubborn evil spirit which cannot be either frightened out by noise or shaken out. But fire will dislodge him! There is nothing like a red hot iron to drive away evil spirits. Let us carry the poor boy to the fire in the courtyard while I heat some coins red hot. [*Exit, carrying Tom as before.*]

American Mother. [*Starting halfway to her feet.*] Oh, no! no! Not a red hot iron! You foolish women, don't you realize he has probably just eaten something that disagrees with him? Yet it is just what this other book says. [*Picks up a second book and reads aloud:*] "How should we in America ever bring ourselves to appreciate

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

the appalling fact that every Christian doctor in India has literally hundreds of thousands of possible patients who die by the thousand each day from lack of knowledge of the simplest medical treatment? Millions upon millions tortured needlessly, patiently groaning in double agony both from the cure and the disease. . . ." Oh, Tom! Tom! [*Reads on in silence, turning page after page. Then:*] It seems unbelievable! But just suppose this were Dorothy, my own little eleven-year-old Dorothy.

EPISODE III

[*Enter Dorothy jubilantly dancing on the platform, spreading out the folds of a gorgeous red sari as she admires it.*]

Now what can be the reason of all this? A marvelous new sari! Oh, I am too beautiful for words! [*Smooths the material happily.*]

[*Enter Hindu Aunt with casket of jewelry which she places on the floor, opens, and starts decorating Dorothy with the contents: necklaces galore, bracelets, long dangling earrings, rings, anklets (brass curtain rings tied on a string around the ankles jingle and glisten splendidly). She arranges a pearl necklace, fillet-style around Dorothy's forehead.*]

Dorothy. [*Enthusiastically.*] Oh, look! look at the rings! Several on each finger, and a great

JUST SUPPOSE

big one on my thumb. Oh, don't I look too lovely? And necklaces . . . oh! oh! oh! But do tell me, why am I being dressed up so beautifully? Is it the festival of some idol? Are we going to have a feast? Just look at these bracelets—I am a dream! [*She admires her wrists.*] Now tell me, why are you making me so splendid?

Hindu Aunt. [*Kneeling on the floor to tie on the anklets.*] Keep your feet still, you excited girl! Well, I really ought not to tell you, yet it seems only fair that you should know—

Dorothy. [*Leaning over to pat her head.*] That's right, tell me! Tell me!

Hindu Aunt. [*Sitting back on her heels and clasping her hands in anguish.*] Dear child, your father—

Dorothy. [*Smiling.*] Yes?

Hindu Aunt. Your father has found a husband for you, and this is the day when you are to be married.

Dorothy. [*Horrified.*] Married? But I don't want to be married! I don't want a husband!

Hindu Aunt. [*Finger on lip.*] 'Sh! 'Sh! Your father will hear you. He will be very much displeased for he has spent a lot of money on your wedding—

Dorothy. [*Pulling off the rings, bracelets, necklaces and flinging them on the floor.*] I won't wear these terrible jewels! I won't get married! I won't! I won't! I won't! [*Stamps her feet. Her anklets jingle. She stoops to untie them.*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Hindu Aunt. [*Catching her hand.*] Let them alone, and do be quieter; some one will certainly hear you.

[*Enter Hindu Mother, stands in the doorway, surprised.*]

Hindu Mother. What is the matter?

Dorothy. [*Clasping her hands beseechingly.*] Oh, mother, don't let my father marry me off to some dreadful man! I've just begun to go to the mission school, mother; I'm just starting to read a primer, and there are still books and books and books which I haven't read yet. And there's my own little place on the school floor; who's going to sit on my own little place if I'm not there? Who's going to read out of my little primer? Oh, mother, I can't get married yet!

Hindu Mother. [*Hands raised in horror.*] Tut! Tut! Who are you to say I-want-to-this and I-want-to-that? Aren't you eleven? Well, it is a regular disgrace to have you around unmarried any longer. Stand still while I put on these necklaces.

Dorothy. I don't want any horrid old necklaces! I don't want any horrid old husband! [*Dashes from the platform.*]

Hindu Mother. [*Sadly shaking her head.*] Poor child! After all, she is only saying what you and I once said when we were little girls.

Hindu Aunt. [*Picking up the jewels and replacing them in the casket.*] Yes, but that is life! In childhood, obey your father; in marriage, obey your husband; in old age, obey your eldest son.

JUST SUPPOSE

What else is there to look forward to? How can she hope to be different from the rest of us?

Hindu Mother. Alas, that is true! Submission is a woman's fate. She will not rebel long; she will get used to the idea. Come, let us find her now and force her to go through with the wedding. Her father must not hear of this. [*Exit.*]

American Mother. [*Greatly distressed; points at her book, reading:*] Yet here it is in black and white—"2,500,000 little girl wives in India under fifteen years of age, plunged from childhood into womanhood at a moment's notice, always unwilling, always unready." Ah, but not my Dorothy! Not my Dorothy! [*Reads on and on, turning pages.*] This is what Alice herself told me about the girl widows. Just suppose this were Alice!

EPISODE IV

[*Enter Alice, wearing Hindu sari and many jewels. Sound of drum and loud sing-song wailing outside. Alice wrings her hands.*]

Oh, what have I done? What have I done that this evil should come upon me? Not that I cared for that wretched old man,—but he was my husband, then he fell ill, he died; and now the tom-toms are beating, the mourners are wailing and I—I am a widow! [*Cowers against the wall in terror.*]

[*Enter three Hindu women draped in saris.*]

First Hindu Woman. You wicked creature, you! [*Points her finger scornfully at Alice.*] It

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

was your sins that killed him! Somewhere, somehow, you have displeased the gods and for this they have taken away your husband. Bah! [*She slaps Alice's cheek.*]

Alice. [*Cowering against the wall.*] Oh, surely it was not my fault.

Second Woman. [*Sneering.*] Not her fault, listen to her! Of course it's your fault. It's always the woman's fault when her husband dies; don't our Hindu scriptures say so? Off with those grand jewels, you unspeakable widow!

[*The three women pull off the necklaces, bracelets, and rings, jostling Alice rudely, hitting her with disdain.*]

First Woman. You accursed of gods and men!

Second Woman. You vile untouchable creature! You outcaste! You scum!

Third Woman. As long as the sun and moon endures no one will ever want you near them; your very shadow will be undesirable. Come, we will shave off your long black hair, then everybody will say: "Oh-ho! look at that wicked widow."

Alice. [*Covering her head with her hands.*] Oh, no, not my hair! Don't touch my hair!

All the Women. Of course we'll touch it! We'll shave it off, and throw you out of the house.

Alice. I can go back to my own mother's house.

First Woman. Back to your own mother's house? La! La! With what open arms she will welcome such an outcaste!

Second Woman. This is the way she will kiss you! [*She slaps her face.*]

JUST SUPPOSE

Third Woman. Oh, don't be so rough with her. You may be a widow yourself some day, with no place to lay your head in peace or comfort, with everybody ashamed of you.

Alice. [*Bowing her head in her hands.*] Oh, what have I done? What have I ever done that the gods should chasten me like this? [*Exit, followed by the three women.*]

American Mother. Suppose that were my Alice! Just suppose! I used to love to quote the saying that, since God could not be everywhere, He made mothers. But there seem to be mothers and—mothers. Deep in all our hearts the same true mother love, but tied about with what ignorance! With what superstition! Yet here in this little book it mentions God's present-day solution for that ignorance. [*Reads:*] "Women's missionary societies are the organized motherhood of the world." Ah, yes, I see it now: God does not make heathen; He makes little children! Well, I'm going to be a mother to all India [*enter Mary Louise and kneels at her feet*] to every little child kneeling to idols [*enter Tom, who also kneels at her feet*] to every little child who is sick [*enter Dorothy; kneels*] to all that multitude of little girls forced to marry young [*enter Alice; kneels*] to little widows, homeless and abused. [*The four Hindu children bow their heads in her lap and she puts her arms around them all, brooding tenderly and saying:*] My family! [*As they hold this tableau, motionless, the family should sing (to the tune "Dennis") :*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love :
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers ;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims, are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear ;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear. Amen.”

CURTAIN

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

IN TWO SCENES; AMERICA AND CHINA; ELEVEN
CHARACTERS; ELEVEN SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Sally }
Nancy }*two young American girls.*

Mow Fah Din, *eleven-year-old Chinese girl.*

Her grandmother.

Chinese daughter-in-law.

Chinese grandson, *ten years old.*

Chinese granddaughter, *nine years old.*

Chinese aunts and uncles, as many as possible.

Missionary.

SCENE I: *The Girl Who Fell Through the Earth, via America.*

When the play opens Sally is seen trimming a hat, trying all the various angles for placing bows, feathers and flowers which she takes from a hat-box on the floor at her feet. Occasionally, in her haste to try all possible arrangements, she holds a flower or feather between her lips.

[Enter Nancy, wearing sweater and hat.
Why, how do you do, Miss Samantha Arabella

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Jemima Montmorency! Trimming our own Easter hat, I see. Well, I'm glad to find you so economical, beloved—no, I can't sit down, thank you, because I'm wondering (now please don't laugh) I'm wondering if you wouldn't like to fall through the earth to-day?

Sally. [*Holding her hat suspended in mid-air, startled.*] Fall through the earth? Why, Nancy, you're crazy!

Nancy. [*Chuckling.*] Not a bit of it, poor old dear. For I know a perfectly safe way you can fall through into China—or anywhere else, for that matter, all for one dollar.

Sally. Oh, it's something to buy, is it? A tube to run through the earth, or a well-digger, or what?

Nancy. [*Primly.*] I'm not in a position to divulge the secret as yet, madam; although I can give you a hint of its wonderful properties when I state that it's sharper than a two-edged sword; it's more precious than rubies; it's a lamp for wandering feet, and it's bread for the hungry. So hand over your dollar, darlint!

Sally. But, Nancy, you know perfectly well that no one thing can be so many other things and still cost only a dollar.

Nancy. [*Very mysteriously leaning nearer.*] Oh, as for that, a dollar buys four of them. Yes—*four!* Or if you want to buy parts, you can get twenty-five little bits of it bound separately for a dollar.

Sally. Nancy, you're ro-mancy! Anyhow, I'm

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

too poor around Easter time to waste a dollar on anything so fabulous.

Nancy. [Eloquently.] Oh, but we want you to fall through the earth especially because it's Easter, my dear. Easter wouldn't be Easter if it weren't for this particular thing. So give me a dollar like a dear little Christian.

Sally. Tell me what it's to buy?

Nancy. [Holding out her hand.] Not till I see the green of your dollar bill in my little pink palm! And lest you are wavering, let me add that this marvelous article has not only carried Easter around the world, but it has built all the hospitals and orphanages and asylums, and has done more to rule the nations than kings or guns or battle-ships.

Sally. [Hurries from the room, returns with dollar bill.] Here's the dollar, you mysterious girl! And now tell me what "it" is.

Nancy. [Closing her fingers over the bill, hurries to the door.] You'll hear to-morrow in Sunday-school, dearest. But I thought that as long as you didn't believe in missions I'd nab you beforehand. And by the way, do you prefer falling through in four big parts or in twenty-five little bits of parts?

Sally. [With injured dignity.] In four big parts, if you please; and if I find you've hoodwinked me, Nancy Norris, I'll never speak to you again. I don't believe in throwing dollars through the earth recklessly.

Nancy. [Solemnly.] I haven't hoodwinked

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

you, dear; and I know you'll approve on Easter Sunday morning. Until then, good-by! [*Exit.*]

CURTAIN

SCENE II: *The Girl Who Fell Through the Earth, via China.*

When this scene opens the Chinese grandmother is seated in a high-backed carved chair fanning herself.

Grandmother. [*Laying down her fan and clapping her hands, calls crossly:*] Mow Fah Din! Mow Fah Din, come here and bring me my tea.

[Enter Mow Fah Din carefully carrying a tray containing a tea-pot and cup.]

Grandmother. You knock-kneed, big-footed slowpoke, how long am I to wait for you, hey?

Mow Fah Din. [*Pouring the tea into the cup.*] The water would not boil, most Ancient and Venerable One. [*She presents the cup with a little bow.*]

Grandmother. Don't mumble your words! I can't understand a word that you say. How do you ever expect to get a mother-in-law if you can't talk distinctly? And now tell me, you clumsy child, what is that queer white thing over in the corner? Speak up, loud and clear, little idiot!

Mow Fah Din. [*Leans near and shouts in her grandmother's ear.*] That's the package of four books which the Foreign Lady left, don't you remember?

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

Grandmother. Of course I don't remember, you saucy little minx! If I did remember why should I ask? Bring the package over here and let me see it. What do women want with books, anyhow—does that white foreign devil suppose we can read? Hurry with the package, you stupid girl.

Mow Fah Din. [*Laying the package on her grandmother's knee, unties the parcel, opens it and holds up four Bibles.*] Here they are, Venerably Aged! One is for our family, one for the Changs, one for the Wongs, one for the Mings.

Grandmother. [*Waving the books away.*] Take them away! Books are nonsense. What does a woman want with a book? But what—*what* is this strange picture on the paper?

[*Mow Fah Din lifts up the piece of wrapping paper so that the audience may see that it is a map of the world. It will be most satisfactory to draw this by hand,—a great black circle inside of which the various countries are outlined and colored brightly. A little liberty may be taken with the position of the countries so that the face may be more strikingly apparent to the audience. Print the name of some frequently-advertised article at the top,—such as "Ivory Soap" or "Quaker Oats."*]

Grandmother. Well, you empty-headed little toad, why don't you tell me what it's a picture of?

Mow Fah Din. [*Making a quaint little curtsy.*] I leave that to your exalted and superior wisdom, Most Honorably Revered. What does it look like

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

to you? [*Holds it up, so that audience may also see.*]

Grandmother. [*Head tilted at one side, critically.*] It doesn't look like anything, much. Those foreign devils are poor artists. Now let me see! Let me see! Ah, I have it—it's a picture of fruit on a round plate!

Mow Fah Din. [*Giving a delighted skip.*] Oh, of course! See, this is a pear. [*She points at South America.*] And this is a-a-a-a— [*She points at Africa, doubtfully.*]

Grandmother. Speak louder! I can't hear what you say when you mumble along that way.

Mow Fah Din. [*Shouting in her ear.*] I didn't really say anything, grandmother. Only, it does look rather like an ear, doesn't it?

Grandmother. [*Snorting disdainfully.*] What miserable artists those foreign devils must be! Imagine painting a pear and an ear on the same plate. And I suppose all that stuff at the top is grapes. [*She sweeps a scornful hand over Europe's many little countries.*]

Mow Fah Din. Oh, Venerable Greatness, look—it is the picture of a face, and not a plate. See, here is the nose in the middle [*Florida*]; these are the ears [*Africa and South America*]; this is the hair [*Europe and South America*]. But there doesn't seem to be any mouth.

Grandmother. [*Shuddering.*] A face without a mouth! What an awful thing! But, Mow Fah Din, I tell you what I think, I think it is the picture of the American's God. Didn't that foreign

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

devil say that she had especially come to tell us about her God? Well, here he is! Put him up by the stove where our little paper kitchen god is; maybe the American's God will protect our rice bowls, too. *Put it up, I say!*

Mow Fah Din. [*Fastening the piece of wrapping paper on the wall.*] Yes, Honorable Grandmother.

Grandmother. What a curious God—to have no mouth.

Mow Fah Din. At least he can't tell anything bad about us to the other gods.

Grandmother. Now that's the first smart thing you've said to-day. Suppose you make an offering to him,—some rice in that red-lacquered bowl. Quickly! Quickly! What makes you so slow and clumsy?

Mow Fah Din. [*Fills the small bowl, then kneels before the map, reverently bows over three times until her forehead touches the floor.*] Oh, idol of the Foreign Lady, protect our hearth, and condescend to be pleased to remain under our unworthy roof-tree.

Grandmother. That's right! That's the way to say it; the child shows some sense after all. I wish I could kneel myself, for it always pays to keep these strange idols in a good humor, but alas! my miserable back is too stiff for bending. *Mow Fah Din*, where are the eyes of this new god?

Mow Fah Din. [*Rising from the floor, looks in vain.*] He doesn't seem to have any eyes, Augustly

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Aged One, unless these are eyes, but I doubt it.
[*And she points at the Great Lakes and the Mediterranean Sea.*]

Grandmother. [*Wringing her hands nervously, and wagging her head peevishly.*] I don't like it! I don't like it! I thought that all gods were so eaten up with spiteful curiosity that they spied on mortals day and night. A god without eyes is terrifying to me; you must go and fetch that white foreign-devil woman at once so that she can teach us how to worship her God properly. Well, aren't you going, you little snail? You stupid slow-poke! Hurry, hurry!

[*Exit Mow Fah Din.*]

[*Enter the rest of the Chinese family, big and little; they all bow politely to the grandmother.*]

Grandmother. Well, I suppose that little chatter-box has told you the dreadful news. Here we have a new idol. He has no mouth and he has no eyes. I don't like it! How do we know how the spirits in the upper air will feel toward us for harboring some one who has no eyes to see us and no tongue to tell them all the mischief we have been doing?

A Daughter-in-Law. [*Bowing.*] Oh, greatly respected mother-in-law, nobody could ever have anything but good to report of you!

[*The rest of the family look sarcastic at such obvious flattery; the old lady herself nods complacently as if it were only her due!*]

Small Grandson. [*Picking up a Bible, runs*

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

over to show his grandmother.] I found this book, Honorable Grandparent.

Grandmother. Oh, you bright little grandson! You brave little boy! [*She pats him on the head.*]

Chorus of the Relatives. [*Clasping their hands in ecstatic admiration.*] Oh, you bright little fellow! You brave little fellow.

Small Granddaughter. [*Picking up another Bible, runs over to show her grandmother.*] And I found this book, Honorable Grandparent.

Grandmother. [*Sarcastically, pushing her away.*] Did you indeed, you silly little copy-cat! Put it right back where you found it! Who said you could pick it up, you naughty girl?

Chorus of Relatives. [*Sneering at the chagrined child.*] Yes, who said you could pick it up, you naughty girl?

[*Enter Mow Fah Din with the Missionary.*]

Missionary. [*Bowing to the Grandmother and then to the others.*] Mow Fah Din tells me you are in trouble—she says you wish to worship my God! That is such good news that I have come quickly.

The Relatives. [*All bowing profoundly; they move forward a chair and say in a chorus:*] Honorably condescend to sit! Honorably condescend to sit!

Missionary. [*Modestly.*] Oh, it is far too important a chair! Let me sit down here nearer the door in one of these more lowly chairs.

Relatives. [*Nodding at one another, in surprise.*] She has as good Chinese manners as any

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

of us! She can't be so foreign a person as we supposed!

Grandmother. If you can demean yourself to sit on such an unworthy chair I beseech you to sit down here beside me at once. For I am an old woman, and I am very uneasy about this new god on our wall. He has no eyes! He has no mouth! He frightens me! I do not like this new religion which you have brought us. Oh, do not stand on ceremony; come here and sit by me if you honorably will deign to favor my roof-tree—

Missionary. [*Seating herself in the seat of honor, saying modestly:*] Well, if you insist! But it is a great courtesy on your part! And now, what is this you tell me about a god on the wall?

Entire Family. [*Pointing.*] There!

Missionary. [*Looks from one to another.*] But I do not understand?

Grandmother. We want to know why he has no mouth. I never saw a god without a mouth.

Chorus of Relatives. [*Bowing.*] And why he has no eyes.

Missionary. But that [*she points*] is not a god! That is a map.

Entire Family. A map?

Missionary. Yes, it is the map of the world which the One True God created. [*Takes the Bible which the grandson has previously handed to the grandmother.*] See, it tells about it here in God's Book—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And this picture is a picture of that earth. See, this blue part is the

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

water. This other part is the land. This little dot is New York. That is the place where I was born. This other bigger place where my finger now is, is China where you live.

Grandmother. Honorably tell it all over again. New York . . . what is New York?

Missionary. Well, it is a city. It is full of white people,—people white as I am white.

Grandmother. [*Looking her over, thoughtfully, merely says:*] Oh!

Daughter-in-Law. What else was in New York besides you?

Missionary. W-e-l-l, so much else! It is such a big place . . . but . . . best of all, New York is full of *churches*. A church is a building where people come to worship the One True God. My husband and I came over to China to build a church for you just like the church in New York. We hope that you will want to worship the One True God.

Grandmother. Put your finger on New York again, Honorable Foreigner.

Mow Fah Din. What is this little dot?

Missionary. That is a country called England.

Relatives. Is England like New York?

Missionary. [*Nodding.*] Yes!

Relatives. Full of churches?

Missionary. [*Nodding.*] Yes, full of churches!

[*The relatives look at one another in surprise, wagging their heads, very much impressed.*]

Daughter-in-Law. Put your finger on *all* the places where people worship this One True God!

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

[*Missionary runs her finger over America and Europe.*]

Little Grandson. [*Putting his finger on a spot in California.*] Is there a church there?

Missionary. Indeed there is!

Grandson. I would like to go to a church!

Relatives. [*Admiringly.*] Listen to the fine little fellow! He wants to go to a church!

Granddaughter. I would like to go to a church, too!

Relatives. [*Rebukingly.*] Who asked you to speak up? You don't suppose the One True God wants silly little girls in His church, do you?

[*Granddaughter cries as if her heart would break.*]

Missionary. [*Gathers her into her arms.*] There! There! You mustn't cry, for as a matter of fact the One True God *does* want silly little girls in His Church. You see, first He wanted *me*, and now that I'm all grown up, I know that He will want you. The Bible says so: listen while I read it to you— But, no, I will ask the little grandson to read it, for I presume you go to school, don't you?

Relatives. Oh, yes, he goes to school! He is very bright!

Little Granddaughter. I want to go to school!

Relatives. Tut! Tut! For shame, are there schools for girls?

[*Little granddaughter cries.*]

Missionary. Don't cry, dear, you shall come to

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

my school as soon as it is built, for it is to be a school especially for little girls.

Mow Fah Din. For me, too?

Missionary. For you, too, when it is finished. For the One True God is particularly anxious for little children to love Him. This is the place in His Bible where He tells us so— [*She finds the place and hands it to little grandson, who with vain conceit stammers haltingly through the verse:*] “S-suffer—the—little—children—t-to—c-come—unto—me, and—forbid—them—not, f-for—of—such—is—the—kingdom—of heaven.”

Relatives. Oh, what a bright boy!

Little Granddaughter. [*Anxiously.*] Does it mean me, too?

Missionary. Indeed it does! It means everybody everywhere. And now, can I do anything more for any of you to-day, for otherwise I must take these three other Bibles to your neighbors, as I promised.

Grandmother. I myself will escort you through the courtyard; there is a question I wish to ask you privately, Honorable Stranger.

Missionary. I shall be honored to answer it! I thank you for your hospitality. [*She bows to the others who bow very politely to her. She picks up the three Bibles, and helps the Grandmother to hobble from the room. The grandmother carries the fourth Bible.*]

Daughter-in-Law. [*Glancing secretively over*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

her shoulder.] I wouldn't have believed it of the old lady, but she is deeply interested.

Relatives. [Nodding in a secretive chorus.] Oh, deeply, deeply!

Daughter-in-Law. Just suppose this new religion changed her as it changed the Ling family!

Relatives. [Looking stealthily over their shoulders.] Oh, impossible! Impossible to change that old lady! [Two of these relatives now take the map from the wall and hold it stretched out between them. One of them points, saying:] That's New York.

All the Others. New York is full of churches!

[All this time Mow Fah Din has been peering curiously through the doorway after her grandmother and the missionary; she now calls:] Oh, what do you suppose I see? Grandmother is . . . [She runs over to tell them the secret, but has turned too quickly to see the map stretched between the two relatives. She crashes into it and falls through it with a crackling, tearing sound.]

Relatives. [Furiously.] Now you've done it, you clumsy awkward crab! You've fallen through the earth! Just wait till the Old Lady sees this terrible misfortune. U'm'm'm'm! You'll be an unhappy girl then!

Daughter-in-Law. Here she comes now!

[Poor Mow Fah Din crouches against the wall, cowering, trembling. Enter Grandmother carrying the Bible.]

Relatives. [Pointing from the torn map to Mow

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

Fah Din.] Look what this clumsy stupid girl has done! She fell through the earth! She tore the earth in half!

Daughter-in-Law. We told her you'd have something dreadful in store for her.

Grandson. [*Poking out his tongue at Mow Fah Din.*] You bad naughty girl; Grandmother will teach you better!

Grandmother. [*Loftily.*] Tut! Tut! What a tempest in a teapot! Bah, what is the matter with all you silly grown-up people that you have to bicker and tell tales on a little girl? Besides, what is a paper map compared with this heavenly Book from the One True God? Come near, while I tell you a secret. I, that speak unto you, old and stupid woman that I am, have made that foreign lady teach me how to read! Well, what do you think of that?

Relatives. Oh, nothing is too difficult for our Venerable Mother! [*They bow in polite unison.*]

Grandmother. Tut! Tut! Don't waste the air in flighty compliments, for I can only read one word. Yet what other woman in our town can do even that? But I decided I must be the first one to know how the name of God looked in print. See, this is how it looks—the foreign lady put a mark underneath it here and here and here and here. She gave me her pencil. She told me to keep on marking that name whenever I came across it on these pages and then I would know how very important God is. But my old eyes are dim, my old fingers are trembly. I need some one to help

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

me, so I am going to teach one of you other poor ignorant women to read God's name also. Whom shall I choose?

[A babel of voices, each one calling: "Choose me! choose me!" They grab the old lady's arms in their eagerness. Only Mow Fah Din silently cowers against the wall, in disgrace.]

Grandmother. Mow Fah Din, come over here and stand before me!

[Mow Fah Din, trembling, approaches.]

Grandmother. Mow Fah Din, who first brought me the Christian's Book?

Mow Fah Din. *[Bowing.]* I did!

Grandmother. *[Chuckling.]* Speak up! Speak up! Don't mumble your words. Who first knelt to worship the Christian's God, even though it was only the map by mistake?

Mow Fah Din. I did!

Grandmother. That's right. Never mumble your words, my child. And who was it fell through the earth just now?

Mow Fah Din. *[Hanging her head, and twisting her hands together in agonized terror.]* I did!

[The relatives nod their heads triumphantly.]

Grandmother. What's that? Speak up, I didn't hear you!

Mow Fah Din. I did! I fell through the earth!

Grandmother. Then you deserve punishment, Mow Fah Din; and the penalty is that you are to be the one I will teach to read. Well aren't you going to weep and wail?

THE GIRL WHO FELL THROUGH THE EARTH

Mow Fah Din. [*Stunned with delight.*] Oh!

Grandmother. What's that? What's that?
Speak up louder!

Mow Fah Din. [*Dimpling happily and clapping her hands.*] Oh, God has waked up little flowers of happiness in my heart already! I'm just like springtime after winter!

Grandmother. That's the way to talk; now come here. See, this is the way the word looks. [*They bend over the page together, all the relatives leaning over Grandmother's shoulder to watch. They hold this position, in tableau.*]

Enter Sally. [*Holding up a dollar bill in her hand. She tiptoes past the Chinese family, and standing at the edge of the platform—slightly at one side—confides in the audience:*] Oh, I wouldn't have missed doing this for worlds! Not for worlds! I never dreamed to see any dollar of mine working such perfectly lovely miracles for a Chinese family,—and not only for this one family, for my three other New Testaments are waking up the Changs and the Wongs and the Mings, also. Oh, I am so glad that I fell through the earth, so very, very glad! I wonder, now, wouldn't you like to fall through the earth yourselves, some of you? . . . wouldn't you?

[*As she stands there, with the dollar outstretched in her hands, the Chinese family around the Grandmother sing:*]

“Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of Life;

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of Life;
Words of life and beauty,
Teach me faith and duty;

Chorus:

Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of Life."

CURTAIN.

SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE

IN ONE SCENE, LAID IN CHINA; EIGHT CHARACTERS;
ONE SPEAKING PART

THE CAST:

Mr. Bald Pate, *an old Chinese man seated in an arm-chair, wearing a Chinese coat and a black skull cap on top of his bald pate. This baldness may be simulated by a tight-fitting flesh-colored bathing cap. He should wear large horn-rimmed spectacles.*

Neighbor, *a man similarly dressed as to coat and cap, but without the glasses or baldness.*

Son's Wife, *should wear a short Chinese coat.*

Huantzi, *little six-year-old girl wearing bright-colored pajamas. A flower over each ear.*

Missionary, *wearing hat and coat; carrying Bible.*

Nurse, *in blue uniform and white apron and cap.*

Enemy, *a third Chinese man in Chinese coat and skull cap. Carries a graceful flat wicker or fiber basket containing fruit, vegetables and a string of green cardboard fish hanging over the side.*

A Reader.

INVITATION AND POSTER SUGGESTIONS:

From pearl gray cardboard cut out as many good-sized keys as you may need for invitations,

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

writing along the shaft of the key the title of the play, with the place and date. For a poster, you will of course mount seven of these gray keys on a piece of cardboard with the picture of a Chinese man at the top.

DIRECTIONS:

This play is to be read by a Reader and acted by seven others in pantomime, each player familiar enough with the text to take his or her cue from the reader's story.

Seven good-sized keys should be cut from yellow cardboard, labeled along the bar of the key with the letters in a column: "Hearsay," "A Tract," "Curiosity," "Education," "Bible," "Christian Pills," and "Forgiveness Through Love."

Then, one at a time, at the end of the various scenes, the appropriate key should be hung by its loop on one of seven hooks across the platform.

Reader. [*Bald Pate seated as above described.*] You are to picture old Bald Pate sitting in his house almost at the end of his life, sedate and pompous in his blue robe and his big horn spectacles, outwardly positive that the way he lives is the only way to live. Yet down in his heart lies a hunger for something he never has put into words; a longing for something he keeps securely locked in his heart. You are now to see the seven keys which unlocked that heart and satisfied his hungry longings.

Reader rings bell. I. [*Enter Chinese neighbor, hobbling, using a cane.*]

SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE

This is a neighbor of Bald Pate's, an old crony, full of the gossip of the village. And you can see from the way they put their heads together that something unusual has happened. It seems that a woman has come to town, some one they call a "white foreign devil from the place called America," and it seems she brings a new doctrine. Yes, actually, a *new God!*

"Well! Well!" sighs Bald Pate wearily, "what do we need with *another?* Why, we have hundreds of gods already!"

"That's so," sighs his friend, forlornly wagging his head. Then bowing, he adds: "Well, good-by, most illustrious and honorable Bald Pate, I must make my insignificant departure."

"Come again!" cries Bald Pate, also bowing; "bring me more news of this astonishing new doctrine. Go slowly! Go slowly!"

And you plainly can see that my first key is "Hearsay." [*Hangs it on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. II. [Bald Pate seated as before, same neighbor enters and hands him leaflet.]

It is three days later, and you see this same neighbor bring Bald Pate a tract. See how he stares at it through his big horn glasses, after the neighbor has politely backed out of the room. The title is: "The Doctrine of the One True God." He does not fully believe any of it, of course, but the Chinese venerate every smallest scrap of paper, so he hobbles over and places the tract on the idol shelf. For where else should a new God be placed, pray tell? And he wonders and wonders. The

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

One True God, eh? Does that mean that something is the matter with all the other gods, then? Those little gods of wood and stone, which always seem to be asleep when he prays to them; or, if not asleep, perhaps gone off on a journey? So there was a God somewhere, supposed to be the one and only God, was there? He must surely know more of this later.

So the "Tract" was his second key. [*Hangs key on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. III. [Bald Pate as before. Enter Son's Wife, carrying tea-tray.]

Now, on a certain day that was exactly as other days, you are to picture Bald Pate sitting as usual, when his Son's Wife enters with his tea-tray. The good woman is in great excitement as she babbles a curious fairy-story while he drinks his tea. It seems that the foreign woman devil has actually opened a school where the village girls can go to learn to read and write.

"What, 'girls'?" shouts Bald Pate, sitting down his teacup in high glee; then he waves his hands in dismissal: "Go, woman, go, before you make more of a dunce of yourself. You talk like a teapot already! Have females brains that they can do what men alone can do? Read and write, indeed!"

"But venerable and august sire," says his Son's Wife, meekly clasping her hands, "I very much desire to send my little daughter Huantzi to get this learning, and have come to ask your distinguished permission."

SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE

"Stuff and nonsense!" laughed old Bald Pate merrily; "send along the little old red hen and be done with it, woman! Maybe the hen can learn, but as for the child Huantzi, never, never! Tell me, is there a single female in all our town who can read or write a single word? Of course not!"

But the good woman will not leave; you can see her begging with her hands:

"But will it hurt to try this new learning, most glorious and celestial father-in-law? Just supposing the poor, insignificant child could store some knowledge in her ignorant stomach, how honorably exalted you would feel."

"W-e-l-l," nods the old grandfather, "it is a fool's errand, of course, but send her along! Send her along. And you will see—you will see."

So the mother backs herself out of the venerable presence, bowing politely; and Bald Pate scratches his puzzled old head.

A female child learn anything? Oh, nonsense! nonsense!

Surely you can see for yourselves that his third key was "Curiosity." [*Hangs key on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. IV. [Bald Pate seated; enter Huantzi.]

It is over a month later, and enter the child Huantzi, carrying a little post-card. Yes, let me assure you right away—it actually is the very post-card over whose back you yourself pasted paper so that it could be sent out in a mission box to China, with a hundred other cards. The missionary has written a golden text on it in Chinese, which the

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

child Huantzi reads to Bald Pate proudly: "God is love," she reads, pointing at the printed characters.

Whereupon old Bald Pate says to himself in the intricate Chinese language: "Bless my buttons, she really can read!" And he is immensely astonished.

Then the child Huantzi tilts back her dear little head and sings a new song she has learned at the mission school: [*Huantzi now sings this, alone.*]

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong."

You can see for yourself how Bald Pate is nodding his head up and down in time with the music; and when she finishes he says: "Now what is this new thing you call the Bible, Huantzi?"

So the fourth key is "Education," which this cute child could grasp, after all. [*Key on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. V. [Bald Pate seated; enter missionary, carrying Bible.]

Day after day Bald Pate hears the child Huantzi humming her little new song, and he keeps wondering to himself about the Bible—what is it, anyhow?

So when our missionary calls he is rather pleased. For she sits beside him, turning the pages of the Bible and telling him of the One True God, how He made the earth and heavens, people and animals, trees and all things growing. There is no other God besides Him.

SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE

Over and over she sang this, week after week. And Bald Pate keeps the Bible, reading it over secretly. He hardly knows whether he dares to accept this Bible knowledge, but nevertheless it is the fifth key to his closed heart. [*Key on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. VI. [Bald Pate lying down. Son's Wife and Huantzi beside him.]

Then there came a day when he ate something which stirred up a tempestuous dragon within him, and he was ill unto death. Both he and his family said that the dragon was the worst kind of an evil spirit, so they called the village quack, a pompous old fellow who came and pricked Bald Pate with needles six inches long to let out the evil spirits. But Bald Pate grew worse and worse. So the quack made curious pills concocted of beetles' legs and coffin nails, grasshoppers' wings and mud from the center of the fireplace. But even such bitter doses did no good, and Bald Pate turned his face to the wall and was about to depart to his ancestors.

Then did the child Huantzi whisper to her mother, suggesting that the missionary be consulted. And by great good fortune you and I had a visiting nurse in that section of China, who now enters. See how easily she helps poor Bald Pate: a plaster on his chest, a pill in his mouth, a hot-water bottle at his feet.

Feebly he waves his hand to call them nearer, and whispers that he is better already! Then he goes to sleep happier than he had ever been before, for a "Christian pill" was the sixth convincing key

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

which unlocked his fast-closed heathen heart. [*Put key on hook.*]

Reader rings bell. VII. [Bald Pate seated. Enter Enemy.]

This is another day, with Bald Pate restored to health. He is reading the Bible, and is almost persuaded to be a Christian. Almost persuaded, but not altogether.

There enters a neighbor who is an old-time enemy. How they have hated each other for years and years! Yet now this enemy enters with friendly smiles, carrying a basket, which he lays at Bald Pate's feet.

"Peace be to you, most honorable and venerable Bald Pate," says the enemy, bowing politely. "Permit me to give you this insignificant basket. You and I have not dwelt in peace, for we have quarreled over the price of fish, and over the price of vegetables. Well, I was wrong. I acknowledge it. I have cheated you many a time, so as a peace-offering let me give you this string of fresh-caught fish, and these vegetables from my garden, and this fruit."

You see him spread these gifts on Bald Pate's knees.

"Dear me! Dear me!" sighs Bald Pate, shaking his head and pushing the presents away, "you draw out my heart! you draw out my heart! For I do not deserve this kindness, neighbor, for the wrong has always been on my side, Celestial One. I was the one who lied and cheated. . . ."

"No, no!" cried the enemy, pushing the presents

SEVEN KEYS TO MR. BALD PATE

farther on Bald Pate's lap, "for I must pour into your honorable ears the fact that since I have become a follower of the One True God I take no pleasure in squabbling and cheating. I pray you forgive my unworthy conduct in the past."

So I close my story by showing you how Bald Pate leans over, clasping the hand of his former enemy, as he cries: "This is all I need to convince me. I have seen these Christians do many impossible things, like teaching empty-headed females to read, and curing men who lie ready to die. I have also read their wonderful Bible, half-believing; but now that I see an enemy ask forgiveness with friendly lips, then indeed do I know what power there is in this Jesus doctrine. Oh, neighbor, my heart is open—wide open!"

For the seventh key was "Forgiveness through love." Again I name the seven keys to Bald Pate: "Hearsay," "A Tract," "Curiosity," "Education," "Bible," "Christian Pills," and "Forgiveness through love." "And the greatest of these is love."

HANDS UP!

IN ONE SCENE, LAID IN THE PHILIPPINES, MEXICO,
CUBA OR PORTO RICO; TEN CHARACTERS (ALL
MEN OR BOYS); SIX SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Alfonso }
Benito } *bandits.*

The Americano, *an American missionary.*

Teofilo, *the bandit chief.*

Five or six other bandits.

DIRECTIONS:

As this entire play is supposed to take place in a wild rocky place, in the Philippines, Mexico, Cuba, or Porto Rico, quite a picturesque effect may be obtained with gray-tan burlap sacks and gray lining material, also plenty of tree branches, palms, ferns, etc., for truly remarkable boulders may be made from chairs lying on their backs or sides, covered loosely with the material mentioned. Leave an open space in the middle of the platform to serve as a roadway in the first half of the play, afterwards it will be the place where the bandits build their camp-fire. On each side of the clear space place a big boulder, with large tree branches growing behind. Plant these securely in buckets and tie inconspicuously to the back sides of the boulders. Put smaller rocks (footstools,

HANDS UP!

books, etc., covered with gray burlap) in front of the boulders, with ferns and palms in the crevices.

An illustrated copy of "Treasure Island" will suggest costume ideas. All the bandits may wear khaki trousers and shirts, with gay bandana kerchiefs (Five-and-Ten-cent Store) knotted in loose V-shape around their necks, and broad bright-colored cheesecloth girdles around their waists. Benito may have brass curtain rings looped by a silk thread over his ears. Both Benito and Alfonso should have their faces masked with colored kerchiefs knotted across face, leaving only eyes exposed.

When the play opens, Benito is crouching behind one large boulder, Alfonso behind the other. Allow several minutes to pass in suspense. Then:

Alfonso. [Lifting an arm above his boulder, waves and hisses:] 'Sst! 'Sst! Benito!

[No answer.

Alfonso. [Rising, but still somewhat crouched over, calls louder:] Benito!

Benito. [Rises from behind his boulder and comes over to meet Alfonso in the cleared space.] What is it, Alfonso?

Alfonso. [Slaps his hip and bends nearly double with laughter.] I cannot hold in another minute! Oh, what a big little surprise it will be for the poor unsuspecting señor, won't it? Bah, I can already see him shudder and turn pale when we spring out on him! [Again slaps his hip.]

Benito. [Seriously.] You born rogue! Is this a laughing enterprise that we should joke about it

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

beforehand? Tell me, have you the gag ready, and the rope for binding him?

Alfonso. [Pointing to his old hiding place.] Naturally, friend of mine! Do you suppose I want him to escape us? Well, not by a thousand saints! Why doesn't he come?

Benito. [Looking up at the sky.] The sun has been two hours away from the middle of the sky. We are early, but he will be along soon.

Alfonso. [Chuckling, grinning, rubbing his hands in high glee.] This is rare sport! I can't get over how eternally startled he is going to be!

Benito. [Sternly.] Silence, Alfonso! You make me regret that I brought you. This is not a light errand. 'Sst! 'Sst! I hear him coming,—back to your rock! When I whistle, jump!

[They rush to their hiding places. Silence.]

Then down the aisle of the auditorium comes a young man, the Americano (in palm beach suit, light hat) riding a bicycle. He carries a Bible in one hand. When he reaches the platform steps, he dismounts. Looking up at the sky, takes off his hat and mops his brow.]

Americano. Phew, it's hot! Judging by the sun I'm early. This old bicycle can't take hills any more, so I'll have to walk her up this young mountain, I fear. *[Leads his bicycle up on the platform, starts down the center, and is about to mount his bicycle again.]*

Benito. [Whistles. Both he and Alfonso leap from ambush, crying:] Hands up, Americano! Hands up!

HANDS UP!

[*Americano lays his bicycle on its side, and starts to fight.*]

Benito and Alfonso. [Face him with pistols.]
Hands up, señor!

Benito. Tie his hands behind him, Alfonso, quick. He's stronger than I thought.

[*Alfonso turns to get coil of rope behind him.*]

Americano. [Calmly, hands held up, but facing audience, says to Benito:] Now look here, my good fellow, you needn't trouble about trussing me up. Just take my watch and my money and be done with it. I won't hinder you, for the truth of the matter is that I have an engagement in the next village in fifteen minutes, and it's more important that I should get there on time than that I should stay here to fight for my valuables. Come on, don't hesitate—you are two to one, and my watch is on a fob in my left-hand pocket; and as for money, what I've got is in the right pocket. Help yourselves! [*He smiles humorously at them, making a bow to each.*]

Alfonso. [Chuckles, and pokes his head around to give Benito a broad wink.] Shall I tie him up, Benito?

Benito. [Gravely, never moving his eyes from theAmericano:] I have said it once. Tie him! Now señor, you will do well to yield yourself calmly. Look out there, Alfonso, he's going to trip you!

[*Americano neatly puts out a foot and trips Alfonso who sprawls flat on the ground.*]

[*Alfonso, picking himself up, shakes a fist sav-*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

agely at the Americano and lets forth a stream of "Z'r'r'r's" that sound very wrathful indeed as he ties the Americano's hands behind his back.]

Americano. [Struggling.] What's the idea? Didn't I tell you to take my money and my watch? What more do you want? I'm in a hurry to be off!

Benito. Alfonso, put the gag across his mouth. He isn't going to be as peaceful as we had supposed.

Americano. [Writhing, in the hope of loosening the ropes on his hands.] You brown villains! What in the world are you up to?

[Alfonso ties the gag across his mouth, knotting it behind. Americano continues to struggle and kick.]

Alfonso. [Admiringly.] My, he's a wrestler!

Benito. If he keeps this up, we shall have to bind his legs and carry him.

Alfonso. [Rebelliously, hands on hips.] Carry him? *Me?* Up that mountain pass? Down those deep gorges? Well, not much! Am I a buffalo, that I should be treated like a beast of burden? Never did I bargain to do any carrying, Benito, and that you know right well.

Benito. [Crossly.] You'll do as you're told! *[To the Americano:]* Señor, we have another use for you, beside your watch and money, so if you come with us quietly all will be well with you. By the grave of my father, I promise it! Alfonso, that is a good bicycle, too good to be left in the open. Hide it carefully.

HANDS UP!

[Alfonso hides the bicycle behind the boulders, carefully, in order not to cause a landslide! Then he and Benito force the Americano at their pistol points to proceed them down the platform steps and down the opposite aisle from the one the Americano previously used. At the back of the auditorium they will have to wait a few minutes before returning down the other aisle, for on the platform other bandits now enter and by taking dead tree branches from the floor (not those set up in buckets) break them into small pieces and lay a fire. Surreptitiously one of the bandits pulls from behind a boulder a concealed electric light cord and bulb; he puts these under the pile of wood. The bandits all kneel around the pile, the one with his back to the audience pulls out from his shirt front pieces of red and orange crêpe paper, which he wedges between the wood like flames. Another bandit takes off his sombrero and gently fans the fire to make it blaze; the bandit with his back to the audience snaps on the light, then places a black pot on the fire. Auditorium has become gradually darker and darker, so that the camp fire on the platform is more effective. The bandits stir the contents of the pot, then one of them ladles out a spoonful of food for each of the men sitting around the fire. This food may be oyster crackers, or broken pieces of graham crackers. They sit around eating it. Occasionally one

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

of them goes over to ladle out a second helping.]

Teofilo. Benito comes slowly.

First Bandit. Maybe the Americano put up a fight.

Second Bandit. He wouldn't have a chance with Benito and Alfonso. I wish I could have been there! Chief, will you have another helping?

[Teofilo holds out hands. Second bandit serves him. They eat in silence.]

First Bandit. *[Pointing down aisle.]* I see them down in the valley. One of them is carrying a torch.

[Down the aisle come Alfonso carrying a torch, then the Americano, then Benito. (The torch may easily be made by concealing an Ever-Ready electric flash-light in a bunch of fag-gots with red crepe paper tongues projecting from the top.) They climb the steps and are met by the bandits, all rubbing their hands together in satisfaction.]

Teofilo. *[Joyfully slapping Benito on the back.]* Well, you caught him, I see? Good for you! Good for you! Señor, this is a welcome sight indeed. I pray you be seated. Alfonso, untie the gag, and give the Americano a drink of water.

[Alfonso obeys this order. The Americano drinks gratefully.]

Teofilo. Benito, untie his hands. *[Benito obeys.]* Señor, be seated.

[The Americano and the bandits sit down around

HANDS UP!

the fire, all of them with their faces toward the audience, however.]

Teofilo. Señor Americano, I apologize deeply for the discomfort we have given you, but we are men consumed by curiosity, and since it is not safe for us to mix openly with the men of your own town or with the peasants in any of the villages you visit, we figured out that our only hope was to hold you up and kidnap you! We apologize.

The Americano. [*Stroking his chin, and looking at Teofilo with a puzzled expression.*] Surely I am the one to be consumed with curiosity!

Teofilo. [*Spreading out his hands.*] That is true! Well, señor, we admit it—we are a band of desperadoes. Bandits, every one of us. We raid the villages down in the valley; we hold up travelers and merchants on the roadways. We are bad fellows, Americano. Very bad.

[The bandits nod their heads, and slap their hands together with silent approval.]

First Bandit. But we aren't so bad as we used to be, chief; not since we saw that old peasant fellow.

Second Bandit. Now that was a curious thing, señor. Every day we used to see this old peasant slip away from his village and go out in a field where there was a rock and some high bushes. The peasant seemed to have a treasure hidden there. We could see him spend hours gloating over it. Then he would hide it and go back to his village.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Teofilo. Can you blame us for wanting to steal that treasure? I sent a trusty fellow down to get it.

First Bandit. [*Thumping his chest proudly.*] He sent *me*! Well, I went. I lifted that rock where the old peasant went. And what did I find?

All the Bandits. Yes, what did he find? Bah!

Teofilo. He came running back with it, and behold, it was not a thing of any value, apparently, and I thought he had made a mistake. So the next day I sent some one else to get the real treasure.

Second Bandit. [*Pointing at himself.*] Señor, he sent *me*! But what did I see? I saw that old peasant searching frantically in the tall grasses and among the rocks. "Ha! Ha!" said I to myself, "what we found was the real treasure, after all!" And while I was looking I saw a Catholic priest and two Spanish officers cross the field to arrest the peasant. They put chains around his wrist. They treated him very roughly, and I heard the priest saying: "This fellow comes out here every day to see the Forbidden Book. I have had spies on his tracks. Well, you know what to do with a man who does such a thing in secret, don't you?" And those two Spanish officers hustled the old peasant off to prison.

Teofilo. Señor, we are consumed with curiosity. For we heard that old peasant crying bravely: "You may find my treasure and you may destroy it, but every word of it is written on my heart! You cannot *beat* it out of me! You cannot *torture*

HANDS UP!

it out of me!" Well? We are consumed with curiosity to know about this Forbidden Book, a book which the Catholic priest forbids, which the Spanish authorities arrest a man for owning. Señor, we have seen you carrying the same sort of a Book as you ride from village to village. We are superstitious about this treasure which is no treasure, yet for which a peasant will go to prison.

Benito. We have kidnaped you so that you can tell us!

First Bandit. Here it is! Queer little black treasure, isn't it, Señor? Not one of us can read, so we don't know what to make of it. [*Hands him Bible.*]

Americano. [*Turning the Book over in his hands.*] A Bible! Well, you've certainly come to the right person. The Bible is my specialty, and I assure you it's a wonderful Book, my friends!

All the Bandits. Is it? But how? [*They lean forward tensely.*]

Americano. What would you say if I should tell you that this is a Book which stops bandits from being bandits? That won't let a man steal? That tells a man to love his enemies?

[*All the Bandits nudge each other. They throw back their heads and guffaw. Each man points a finger of scorn at the Bible.*] Señor, you joke!

Americano. No, I am dead in earnest! It is a Book more powerful than any two-edged sword. I know it seems little and black and unimportant, yet it has made great kings tremble and change

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

their manner of life, and it has made humble people courageous and strong.

Teofilo. Señor, read us from the Book.

Americano. Bring me a torch.

[*Alfonso brings his torch. They cluster closer around theAmericano, who opens his Bible and reads in pantomime inaudible to the audience, while a singer (either seen or unseen) should sing all four verses of the hymn beginning:*

“Tell me the Old, Old Story,
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.
Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child,
For I am weak and weary,
And helpless and defiled.”

[*During all the four verses the bandits can be seen listening, questioning, pointing, nodding their heads approvingly, joyfully.*]

Teofilo. [At end of hymn.] Señor, it is wonderful, that Book! We did not know! We did not dream!

All the Bandits. [Nodding.] Wonderful! Wonderful!

Teofilo. Señor, you have been so good to us. But see, it is midnight. Shall we not lie down to sleep? You will be quite safe with us, I assure you, and to-morrow we will talk more of these matters.

HANDS UP!

Americano. [Smiling.] I have trusted you with my life all day at the point of a gun, surely I have reason to know that we are friends. But before we sleep, I want you to repeat with me the one great prayer which all men everywhere are praying to-night. Will you not close your eyes and pray it as I read it from God's Book?

[*All the Bandits close their eyes and repeat the Lord's Prayer, sentence by sentence, as theAmericano reads it from Matthew 6:9-13. (Request the audience to join also.) After the prayer both bandits and missionary lie down on the floor around the camp-fire. After a moment of silence two women's voices are heard singing the beautiful benediction, "The Lord Bless Thee, and Keep Thee," hymn number 210 in Northfield Hymnal, No. 2.*]

CURTAIN

FARE, PLEASE

IN TWO ACTS; EIGHTEEN CHARACTERS; FIVE
PRINCIPAL SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

Street-car Conductor.

Eight Passengers.

Mrs. Friend, *another passenger.*

Mr. Czako.

Mrs. Czako, *his wife.*

Sophie Czako, *their twelve-year-old daughter.*

Mona Czako, *their ten-year-old daughter.*

Herza Czako, *their eight-year-old daughter.*

Kyra Czako, *their seven-year-old daughter.*

Gretel Czako, *their five-year-old daughter (very
small for her age).*

Janos Czako, *their ten-year-old son.*

INVITATIONS AND POSTERS:

Small tickets similar to street-car tickets may read: "FARE, PLEASE! This ticket good for one continuous ride (with stop-over privileges in a first-class seat) at the ——— Church on ——— at ———"

For the poster a long street-car cut from cardboard labeled above the windows and under the roof: "SPECIAL CAR FOR ——— CHURCH." Paste the pictures of persons behind every window.

FARE, PLEASE

DIRECTIONS:

The interior view of a street-car, extending from the front edge of the platform toward the back, may be made with one row of five chairs facing another row of five chairs, with an aisle between. A conductor in blue uniform and cap should stand at the rear to call out the streets, help the passengers aboard, and ring the bell for signals and for fares. This bell may be attached to the end chair at the rear if there is no way to have it higher up near ceiling where it may be pulled by a cord. When the curtain rises the passengers should be seated as follows:

Left row of five chairs—(1) Mrs. Friend, with her baby (a doll), (2) vacant, (3) lady with arms full of bundles, (4) man reading newspaper, holding it widespread before him, (5) lady.

Right row of five chairs—(1) gentleman (wearing cut-away coat, flower in button-hole, gray gloves, patent leather shoes, high hat, carries cane), (2) young girl in sport clothes, carrying tennis racket, (3) child kneeling on chair to "look out the window," frequently points at objects outside, waves hands, etc., (4) child's mother, continually moving his feet away from the girl with tennis racket, (5) vacant.

NOTE:

The passengers may all sway slightly to represent the jolting of the car. You may care to change the street names for those in your own town.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

ACT I

(In the Street-car)

Conductor. Main Street! Change cars for all points north and south. Step lively, please!

[Enter School Girl, arms full of books, carrying music roll. Seats herself in fifth chair on right. Immediately opens a book, studies diligently, lips moving.]

Conductor. *[Pulls bell cord. Walks down aisle calling:]* Fare, please! *[Stops before gentleman in first seat, who dives into his pocket and hands a greenback to conductor, who makes change.]* Fare, please, lady. *[This to woman in third seat on the left. She has a hard time balancing her many bundles on her lap as she reaches for her wristbag, slips it off her wrist, opens it, removes coin purse, opens purse, and extracts sufficient coins one at a time! Conductor then collects fare from school girl. Calls:]* Construction Street! All aboard there. Say, either get on or get off, can't you?

[Enter Mr. Czako—collarless, red bandanna knotted loosely around neck; wears blue overalls, white-powdered, very old white-powdered coat, dusty slouch hat, muddy shoes; hands very dirty; carries dinner pail. Moves up to front of car and stands lost in wonder at the vision of the fine gentleman. Bends slightly nearer to look him up and down.]

Conductor. *[Walking up aisle.]* Fare, please!

FARE, PLEASE

[No response from the spellbound Mr. Czako. Conductor touches him on the shoulder.] Fare, please.

Mr. Czako. [Startled, looks around in some alarm.] Huh?

Conductor. [Crossly.] Say, ain't you got (five) (seven) cents?

Mr. Czako. [Smiling, and shrugging shoulders amiably.] Oh, sure! Sure! [Wedges his dinner-pail between his knees, as he digs deep into his pocket and hands money to the conductor, who relents and says pointing:] There's a seat behind you. [Mr. Czako looks over his shoulder, backs into second seat on the left, sitting on the very edge of it with his dinner-pail on his knees, obviously still lost in admiration of the gentleman across the aisle. Takes off his own soft tattered hat, all powdery with cement, looks from it to the high silk hat; blows as much dust as possible from his hat, replaces it on his head.]

Conductor. Factory Street! Watch your step, there!

Poor Foreign Woman. [Who has been waving at the car with her bundles as she approaches it from the entrance.] Say, Mister, does this car pass the cemetery?

[Conductor nods.

[Foreign Woman enters the car carrying two immense bundles, one wrapped in newspapers. Has small bunch of flowers in her hand. Wears black shawl over her head, pinned under her chin; full gingham apron. Places

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

one bundle in the aisle. All passengers sway; she lurches forward into lap of the man reading a newspaper. He looks over the top of it, wrathfully.]

Conductor. Kindly move up forward in the aisle.

[Foreign Woman picks up her bundle, starts to move forward; all passengers sway again; she almost loses her balance.]

Gentleman. [Rising and lifting hat.] Madam, won't you take my seat? [He guides her courteously by the elbow into the seat. The woman bobs her thanks and murmurs:] Oh, tank-a! Tank-a!

Mr. Czako. [Excitedly slaps his knee with genuine enthusiasm. Nudges Mrs. Friend.] Say, what do you know about that? [Jerks head in beaming approval.] That should be why I come on America—all free and equal here, see?

Conductor. Fifth Avenue! All aboard, lady.

[Enter Stylish Lady, in fashionable clothes; lorgnette dangles from chain around her neck. She comes down the aisle peering through the lorgnette in search of a seat. There is none, of course, but

Mr. Czako. [Jumps up, pushing his dinner pail under his arm, awkwardly pulling off his hat.] Take my sit, ledly.

[Stylish Lady looks Mr. Czako up and down through her lorgnette, then pulls her skirt around her fastidiously and turns away.]

[Mother in fourth seat on the right lifts child

FARE, PLEASE

into her lap, so that the lady may take the child's place.]

[Mr. Czako who has just given a quaint bow, stands transfixed with surprise at the rebuff. Then puts on his hat. Sits down. Strokes his chin dubiously, looking from the woman on his left to Mrs. Friend on his right. Then dusts off his knee with his right sleeve. Looks again at Mrs. Friend, inquiringly.]

[Mrs. Friend gives a half smile.

Mr. Czako. [Responds with a quick shy smile. Brushes his sleeve in his embarrassment. Then jerks his thumb in the direction of the gentleman standing in the aisle:] Guess I ain't no fine gent'mans like him!

Conductor. Pleasant Boulevard.

Mrs. Friend. [Rising, takes small satchel from the floor. Just as she passes Mr. Czako he also arises. She turns:] Oh, are you getting off here, too? I wonder, would you carry the baby for me?

Mr. Czako. [Bobbing his head, excitedly.] Oh, sure! Sure! *[Takes baby in his arms. Both he and Mrs. Friend then leave the car, and walk from the back of platform toward the steps leading to the floor of the auditorium. At edge of steps they stop, and Mr. Czako says:]* One awful schweet leetle nice white bebee! Me, I got six leetle bebee around to my house, yet once!

Mrs. Friend. [Smiling.] Oh, I just knew that you had babies at your house. That's why I wanted you to carry my little boy. How big are your babies now?

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Mr. Czako. [*Shifting baby to his left arm, gesticulates with his right hand.*] Oh, beeg! Beeg! Sophie, she come to here on my shoulder; Janos, he came to here. Not much real bebee left around to my house now. My wife she can't do nuttings mit the kids no more. I wish you could come see her some day.

Mrs. Friend. Why, I should love to come! You must tell me your name and address—

Mr. Czako. [*Pointing to himself.*] Paulos Czako, twelf Tenement Street.

Mrs. Friend. Thank you, I will remember—Mr. Paulos Czako, twelve Tenement Street. And now, how can I thank you for helping me this way? [*Reaches out her arms and takes the baby.*]

Mr. Czako. Oh, I got an awful proud over carry these so nice leetle clean white bebee. [*Straightens his shoulders, and dusts powder from his coat.*] I ain't so dirty I couldn't carry bebees!

Mrs. Friend. [*Regretfully.*] Ah, you mustn't let the memory of that lady in the street car hurt you; she was judging by the outward appearance, which is never fair, Mr. Czako, for you're a true gentleman at heart, and I am very proud to know you. Good-by, and thank you! [*She shakes his hand; then walks down platform steps and seats herself inconspicuously in front row.*]

Mr. Czako. [*Remains standing on platform, hat again in his hand, having waved it after her and thrown a kiss at the baby.*] By-by, bebee! [*Then, after a moment's reflection:*] Vell! vell! You are

FARE, PLEASE

a true gent'mans, Mr. Czako! *Me.* Vell, I ain't so good a gent'mans as I raises my leetle son Janos to be. Joost you wait und see.

CURTAIN

ACT II

(In the Czako Home)

Kitchen table in center of platform. Eight chairs around the walls.

[Enter Sophie. Moves eight chairs close to table.]

[Enter Mona with red tablecloth, which she spreads on the table.]

[Enter Herza with dishes and silverware, which she deposits on the table with a clatter. She and two other sisters distribute the utensils at the eight places.]

[Enter Kyra, with loaf of bread on plate, and a knife. Places these at one end of the table, and commences to slice the bread.]

[Enter Gretel cautiously carrying pitcher of water far too big for her. Her four older sisters swoop down on her, commandingly:]
Now don't you dast to drop it, Gretel Czako. Leave me have that pitcher! *[Gretel elbows them away triumphantly and places pitcher on table safely.]*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

[*Enter Janos.*] What, ain't popper home yet?
Say, I want my supper! [*Takes crust of bread and starts eating it.*]

Sophie. [*Grabbing it away from him.*] For shame you couldn't wait until your popper gets home, Janos Czako.

[*Janos starts chasing her around the table trying to get the crust. The other girls come and go, carrying more dishes, etc.*]

[*Enter Mrs. Czako, wearing gingham house dress and big full apron. Carries frying pan and large fork. Mr. Czako follows her, taking off his coat which he hangs over the back of his chair at one end of table. Mrs. Czako sits opposite him; children scramble to seats along the sides of table. All bow their heads for silent grace; Gretel, however (facing audience), stares through her fingers at her mother's face. When the grace is over, Janos becomes very rude, taking food from his sister's plates as fast as his mother fills them, tweaks their ears and pulls their hair.*]

Mr. Czako. [*Clearing his throat impressively, points at Janos.*] Janos, I want you should be always polite on a leddy,—und sisters is leddies. For sooner you make always politeness on leddies, then I should buy you a white collar und a necktie-from-silk. You like? Yes?

Janos. [*Utterly dazed, runs his finger around his bare neck, stroking it unbelievably.*] Me? A . . . white . . . collar? Me? A . . . necktie . . . from . . . silk? Say, do you mean it?

FARE, PLEASE

[*Mr. Czako nods, his mouth too full of food to answer.*]

Chorus of Five Sisters. [*Their forks suspended in mid-air:*] Oh, say, won't Janos look schwell in a necktie-from-silk?

Sophie. Popper, maybe you buy me ribbons-from-silk, yes?

Mona. Popper's going to buy me sashes-from-silk, ain't you, popper?

Herza. Popper's going to buy me silk stockings—

All the Sisters. Popper, I want sashes! Popper, I want ribbons for the hair!

Mrs. Czako. [*Waving her arms.*] Sh! Sh! For shame you drive your poor popper wild mit teasings! He ain't so rich he could buy sashes, und ribbons for hairs.

Janos. [*Jumps up from the table, struts around to his father's chair, thumbs hooked through his armhole seams.*] How soon you buy me that necktie?

Mrs. Czako. Sophie, Mona, Herza, you all carry the dishes off und make a good wash on them. Gretel, you, too, und Kyra. Janos, my son, wait till I speak you a new word.

[*The table is soon cleared, as each girl carries away an armful of dishes. Mr. Czako sits placidly at his place, drumming on the tablecloth. The girls cluster around the doorway curiously.*]

Mrs. Czako. [*Smoothing her apron, and then folding her arms.*] Janos, your popper's awful set

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

on how you should be polite on the leddies. [*Mr. Czako nods his approval.*] Your popper says how down on the *sidewalks* you should be polite. [*Mr. Czako nods.*] Und all day by the *schoolhouse*,—polite. [*Mr. Czako nods.*] Und all times here at home mit your sisters, always politeness. Politeness could be very American, Janos. Your popper wants you should be always one nice American. [*Mr. Czako nods more vigorously still.*]

Janos. [*Obviously impressed, but utterly stunned, looks from one parent to the other in silence. Then, swallowing with difficulty, asks:*] But why for should I make this new politeness on everybody?

Mrs. Czako. Because all times when you make politeness on people, they makes politeness back on *you*, see? Ain't that why, popper?

Mr. Czako. [*Nods.*] Sure I learnt it off the street-car conductor: "Fair, please!" he yells to everybody. But one awful grand leddy she ain't so fair on me. No! I make fair politeness on her, like this: [*Rises, bows, points to his vacant chair.*] "Take a sit, leddy!" But she ain't making no politeness back on me. [*Imitates her disdainful glance, her over-nice expression, her aloof fashion of mincing away, drawing her skirts carefully around her. Mr. Czako shakes his finger at Janos.*] It ain't good American not to make fair play in this so free und equal countree, Janos, see? [*Janos nods.*]

Gretel. [*Comes running over to him.*] Popper, that's what they learnt us at Sunday-school around

FARE, PLEASE

to the Emmanuel Mission. It's verses from the Bible, popper. It says: "Do like udder folks does on you."

Sophie. [*Shaking her head with a superior smile, hurries over also.*] Gretel ain't got it so awful straight, popper. This is how the Bible says: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mona. [*Also coming nearer.*] It's the Golden Rule, popper.

Mrs. Czako. [*Taking the crestfallen little Gretel on her lap, and kissing the top of her head.*] Sure! Sure! One way they says it in churches, from Bibles; und one way they says it in street-cars, from conductors—"Fair, please!" It ain't so easy you could forget it.

[*All the children wag their forefingers playfully at one another, whispering:*] "Fair, please!"

Janos. [*Coming to the edge of the platform makes a stiff little bow to the audience, and cupping his mouth with the palms of his hands, says:*] It ain't so easy you could forget it—just be fair, please.

[*Entire Czako family rise and bow to the audience, the children curtsyng in quaint European style as they whisper:*] "Fair, please!"

CURTAIN

INDELIBLE

A SHADOW PLAY

DIRECTIONS:

The incidents in this play are to be acted as shadow pantomimes projected on a large sheet while Mammy Liza Jane tells the story at the fire-side of her little log cabin. If a stereopticon sheet is not obtainable then several bed sheets may be stitched together and stretched across the platform with plenty of space behind and also some space in front.

By practicing, you can discover just where to hold your electric light bulbs, or lamps, behind the players in order to cast their shadows most clearly on the sheet in the various scenes. Keep a list of these "best spots" in order that the actual performance may pass off smoothly.

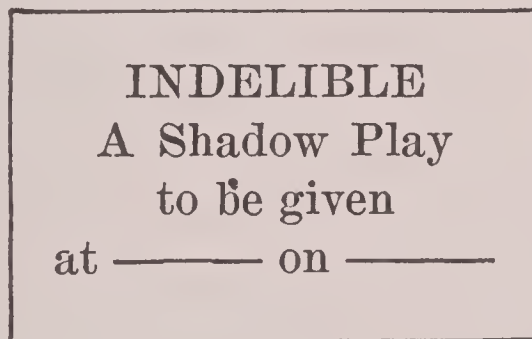
In front of the sheet build a mock fire, either with or without andirons; have a great pile of logs with leaping jagged flames of yellow, orange and red tissue paper illuminated by a concealed electric light bulb or Ever-ready electric torches. If actual logs cannot be used, excellent substitutes can be made by wrapping umbrellas and other long objects in brown crepe paper. A quaint old rush-bottomed chair with a spindle back should stand at one side of the "hearth" to complete the picture of a log cabin fireplace.

INDELIBLE

Before the play, and while the audience is assembling, have plenty of familiar negro songs sung, such as "Old Black Joe," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Way Down Upon the Swanee River," "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny."

INVITATIONS, TICKETS AND POSTERS:

Buy sheets of light-weight black cardboard and cut them in the shape of little ink bottles with sloping sides. Paste a blue-bordered Dennison gummed label in the center of each bottle, the label reading:



These smaller ink bottles may be either tickets or invitations. For a poster, cut out an exceedingly large ink bottle from a full-sized sheet of the black cardboard. The label should be at least 8 x 11 and should contain some Negro pictures, e.g., from certain Cream of Wheat advertisements you can get a very quaint old Negro "uncle," and from the Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour advertisements you can secure a typical picture of an old southern mammy.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

PRELUDE

[Enter Mammy Liza Jane, limping and holding one hip as she settles herself in the chair by the fireside, groaning in pain. Her face, neck, and hands should be very carefully blackened, with absolutely nothing of the comic in her make-up. A red bandana kerchief should be knotted around her head; she should wear a full-gathered gingham apron and a shawl around her shoulders.]

Mammy Liza Jane. [Panting for breath.] Land sakes, I'se sure got de misery in my poor old bones! Reckon likely I'se not young no more! Reckon I'se getting old—now what am it the Good Book says? *[Reaches under her chair and picks up (1) a pair of horn spectacles which she props on the end of her nose and (2) a book which from all appearances is the Bible, but actually it should be this book camouflaged with a black slip cover containing five large gold letters to form the word "B-I-B-L-E." She can refresh her memory with the text of this long story while pretending to be thumbing her Bible.]* Yas, sah, yas, sah, here am the very words—"The grasshopper am a burden." Dat's me, oh, Lord, dat's me! *[Nods her head reflectively.]*

[Enter Topsy, little Negro girl in patched pinafore, her black hair braided into two little pig-tails which stick out at right angles from the sides of her head. She is leading Nan, a young

INDELIBLE

college girl in summer dress, carrying a hat in her hand.]

Topsy. [Pointing.] There's mammy! Mammy, here's Missy Nan come all the way from the big city.

Mammy. [Trying to rise quickly, but too rheumatic to get up.] For de land sakes! Oh, my honey chile! My honey chile!

Nan. [Rushing forward.] Now don't you dare get up, Mammy Liza Jane; I know you've probably got that same old misery in your bones. But here I am back again from college! Are you glad to see me? *[Kneels beside her, kissing her, and slipping into her open arms.]*

Mammy. [Swaying back and forth with delight.] Oh, my honey chile! Oh, my bleffed lil Missy Nan! You'se jess like a lil white rose! You'se jess like a lil fleecy cloud!

Nan. [Laughing, and shaking her playfully.] Oh, stop it, stop it, Mammy Liza Jane! I'm a very sedate college graduate now. . . .

Mammy. [Peering at her up and down over the tops of her spectacles.] Yassum, I knows all about them colly places! But you don't look a speck different, honey. Not one single lil speck.

Nan. [Sitting down at Mammy's feet.] And now I want a story, just like you used to tell me years and years ago.

Mammy. [Raising her hands in shocked surprise.] Now listen to this here lil white lamb! *Stories*, huh? Yet she been to one of them grand big colly places? Yassum! Books piled as high

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

as the barn door? Yassum! Why, honey, ain't you got one of them dippylomas all rolled up in a lil white scroll and tied up wid ribbons like it was somebody's pig-tail? Why, honey, reckon this very minute you knows more'n the parson and the grocer and the undertaker all rolled togedder! Then what for you come demanding *stories*, huh?

Nan. [*Reaching up a hand to stroke the old black face.*] Ah, there's nobody in the whole wide world who can make me see pictures in the fire like you can, Mammy Liza Jane.

Mammy. [*Clasping Nan's hand against her bosom, sways from side to side with it, crooning:*] U'm'm! U'm'm! My own bleffed lil angel chile! U'm'm! U'm'm!

Topsy. [*Who has been standing first on one foot and then on the other, hands on her hips, admiring the young white lady, now claps her hands excitedly.*] Mammy Liza Jane, if it's all the same to you, jess you tell her 'bout dat lil colored boy what slep under the sidewalks.

Mammy. [*Waving an indignant hand.*] Now jess you run along, Topsy. Nobody ain't asking you nuffin! No, sah! Jess you run along real spry, now.

[*Topsy turns away reluctantly, kneading her little fists into her eyes, her shoulders heaving with sobs.*]

Nan. [*Grabs her by the pinafore.*] Oh, but we've got to have Topsy here, Mammy Liza Jane. A story wouldn't be a story without Topsy to hold my hand. Indeed it wouldn't! So you sit here

INDELIBLE

beside me, Topsy, just as still as a mouse, for Mammy's going to tell us about the boy that slept under the sidewalk. So let's look in the fire for the pictures. . . .

[Topsy and Nan sit hand in hand at Mammy's feet, their faces turned toward the fire and the sheet. It will add to the picturesqueness if Topsy sits in such a position that her little bristling pig-tails are silhouetted against the sheet.]

Mammy. [Chuckling.] Ain't nebber seed nobody like Missy Nan for demanding this pertikler story! Well, honey, if you shuts your eyes jess as tight-as-tight, reckon maybe you can conjure up a lil ship wid sails and poops and drefful old-fashioned rigging. Yassum. Jess a lil lovely ship a-bobbing on the deep blue ocean. See it, honey?

[Nan nods. Topsy also, her pig-tails bobbing eagerly.]

[Shadow Scene I:

[A long table has been placed directly behind the sheet. A very realistic "ocean" may be shown by means of a long strip of narrow shelf paper held flat against the sheet—at right angles to the table—the upper edge cut into billows and ripples. Somebody holds each end of this strip, gently vibrating it up and down, and back and forth. Six inches behind the "ocean" two other persons help to navigate the ship itself, which should be a cardboard silhouette of the "Mayflower" at least a foot long. Be sure to cut out the windows

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

in the poop and to run heavy strings from the masts to the bow and sides, as such rigging and cut-out work will show to advantage when an electric light bulb is held in such a way that the ship's shadow is thrown on the sheet large and distinct. In order to hold this silhouette ship upright, fasten it with brass fasteners to the side of a shoe-box, attaching strings to the narrow ends of the box so that it may be slowly dragged from Africa to America. A palm tree on the right represents "Africa," a log cabin at the extreme left represents "America." The palm tree may be a pencil or twig (inserted in an empty spool) with pieces of slashed paper tied at the top for leaves. The log cabin, like the ship, is merely a silhouette,—slanting roof, chimney, open doorway, small window, rough beam ends to represent the rough logs at the corners of the cabin. Over the doorway and window paste red paper in readiness for the next scene. Fasten the silhouette log cabin against the side of a shoe box so that it may stand upright securely. If joss-sticks burn in a pill-bottle fastened behind the chimney, smoke will come spiraling out in a very realistic fashion. Pine tree tips may be fastened at the back corner of the shoe box, projecting enough to loom like a tree when the electric bulb magnifies it on the sheet. While the ship is making its slow voyage across the table, Mammy is explaining—]

INDELIBLE

Mammy. Now, honey, that ain't no pleasure ship! That am the most mighty uncomf'table lil ship that hadn't ought to have ever trabbled no-where's three hundred years ago. For I reckon I still hears the groans coming out of the middle po'tion of that ship. Yassum; groans and moans and drefful carryings on. That am no pleasure ship, honey! The "Mayflower" am *hilarious* compared to that there lil boat called the "Treasurer." Ever notice how nobody can groan and moan like Negroes? Honey, reckon they learnt how in that there lil boat. 'Deed they did! And they jess kep' right on learning; for there come a day in history when the Folks-That-Was-White-As-Paper got mighty tired of doing their own work. Yassum. They done got mighty tired of planting their own tobaccy and picking their own cotton and toting their own parcels. But there *was* that 'baccy and there *was* that cotton; so they done reach way over the deep blue sea and nab some Folks-That-Was-Black-As-Ink, in Africa. Now ain't' that jess monstrous smart of them, honey? But, oh, those poor Black-As-Ink folks—how they groans! U'm'm! How they moans! U'm'm! How they carries on! U'm'm! For they don't like being sold as slaves, honey. Howsoever, they built them lil log cabins. . . .

[*Shadow Scene II:*

[*By this time the ship should have "landed" in America and be removed from sight; the ocean may be gently dropped between the table and*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

the sheet, while the log cabin is pulled by strings to the center of the table. Before this happens, however, a little lighted electric torch should be placed in the shoe-box, for the light will then shine through the red paper window and doorway giving the effect of firelight coming from inside the cabin. In projecting the cabin silhouette on the sheet the movable electric bulb will give a sunset effect if it is covered with a layer or two of vivid orange crêpe paper.]

Mammy. And ebery ebening when the sun goes down, those lonely Black-As-Ink folks sit around their lil cabin doors most ready to die, honey; 'twill somebody starts up a song . . . jess you listen . . . 'pears to me I kin hear 'em jess as plain as day this very minute. . . .

[Topsy's pig-tails bob excitedly.]

[Behind the sheet some one sings "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." A banjo or ukulele will add the requisite minor qualities.]

Mammy. Honey, folks only sing ob dying when they ain't got no love ob living; so now I'se gwine to conjure up a picture of the Black-As-Ink folks working. . . .

Nan. Oh, Mammy, I never liked that picture!

Topsy. *[Bobbing her pig-tails and hiding her head in her hands.]* Me neither!

[Shadow Scene III:]

[At the close of the song above mentioned, remove all lights from behind the sheet and

INDELIBLE

noiselessly shove the table aside so that at once a group of three persons may have their shadows projected on the screen as they bend over picking cotton from some twigs placed in jars. One of the workers straightens herself painfully, hand on her back as if it were nearly broken; wipes face, and fans herself with her hand. Overseer strides on scene, lash in hand, cruelly beats her, shouting:] Get to work, you lazy good-for-nothing! Quit your loafing!

Woman. Oh, I ain't loafing, mistah— [The whip however descends with fiendish lashing on her back, loud enough to be heard by the audience. Fortunately for the victim, the overseer may strike several feet behind her, for the light which projects both figures on the sheet will make it look as if she were struck.]

Nan. [Reaching up to pat Mammy's cheek.] Oh, please skip the rest of that picture, Mammy Liza Jane! I'm so ashamed we white folks let it happen. . . .

Mammy. [Nodding her scarlet turban.] Yas, honey, all the same as Mistah Abr'am Lincoln was ashamed, his very own self. Says he: "If ever I gets a chance to hit this thing," says he, meaning slavery, "I'se gwine to hit it hard!" And he did hit it so powerful hard that he 'bolished it, honey! And the name of the thing he done hit it with am called the proc'mation of 'manc'pation. Oh, honey, he were a gent'man, 'deed he were!

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

[*Shadow Scene IV:*

[*A picture of Mr. Lincoln may be projected on the sheet by holding a very powerful lighted bulb directly behind a picture which is printed on ordinary paper.*]

Topsy. [*Pointing excitedly.*] Mammy, I sees Mistah Abr'am Lincoln, 'deed I does!

Mammy. Shucks, Topsy, reckon you'se most too smart to live wid! And now I'se approaching the hero of the tale I'se about to embellish. All on account of Mistah Abr'am Lincoln this here lil boy's folks am all through wid being slaves, so they done go and work in some salt mines. Yassum. From before the time when the sun riz up in the morning 'twill long after she done set in the ebening, dat lil boy and his whole fambly work in those salt mines. Yassum. But all the same, you ain't gwine find Booker early in bed at night, honey. Listen—don't you hear the clock strike ten. . . .

[*Shadow Scene V:*

[*Some one behind the sheet strikes metal with metal ten times. The light projects on the sheet a small boy, elbows propped on a table, head in hand, studying by the light of a candle. Wiggles and scratches himself as Mammy tells of his flaxen shirt.*]

Mammy. But ten o'clock ain't bed-time for Booker,—land, no! He sit there and he study his A B C's jess like it was early morning dew. Then bimeby don't you hear that clock strike 'leben—

listen [*sound of clock*], but Booker he still study, and study, and study. Now Topsy, don't you dast to laugh at how he go scratch hisself—that am all account of him being poor. Yassum. And wearing a home-made shirt of rough flax. Honey, that flax done prickle all the same as chestnut burrs for three, maybe four, weeks 'twill bimeby the sharp pints gets broke in, and Booker he don't need to scratch quite so hard. But land sakes, he *study* all the same as ever—jess listen to that clock! [*Strikes twelve.*] Presactly,—midnight. And now you know how hard Booker he learns them books of his'n, 'twill bimeby his mammy see it and his pappy see it, and they 'low Booker kin go to day school. Yassum. But Booker he 'low he *can't* go, not without he got a cap.

[*Pantomime of Booker pointing at his head, rubbing it, his mother first shaking then nodding her own head as she takes pieces of cloth, cuts them out and hastily bastes them to form a cap which she hands to Booker. He tries it on and claps his hands in approval. Exit Booker, his mother waving good-by.*]

Mammy. So then if his mammy don't make him a cap out of old pant legs! Booker, he put it on his lil woolly head and away he sprint toward school.

[*Shadow Scene VI:*

[*A row of five pupils is seated, backs to the sheet,—three girls, then an aisle, then two boys and an empty chair. The little girls have*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

bristling pig-tails like Topsy's. Topsy should point to them and giggle into her hand! A teacher stands before her class, calling the roll and marking attendance. Enter Booker, sits in vacant chair, removes his cap.]

Mammy. But, honey, that ain't no grand colly place like where *you* got graduated from. That am jess a lil no-account country school. Yassum. But Booker he ain't been there a minute afore he caught on how those scholars has each got two names or even three names. And all the name that Booker got am jess—Booker! He ain't never heard tell how black folkses had two names all the same as white folkses. So Booker he sit there right scart. He got his *cap*; but he ain't got no name. So what you spect he gwine do 'bout it 'xcept maybe make one up? Yassum. Make one up! Listen. . . .

[Scene VI continued:

[As the teacher calls the roll the pupils stand up and say "Present":]

Florabella Belinda Adams?—Present; Seraphina Jemima Fishback?—Present; Jerusha Smith?—Present; Tobias Walker?—Present; Sambo Jones?—Present. And you little new boy what's never been here before, what's your name? *[Booker stands up, scratches his head, gulps, then says:]* Booker, ma'am. Er-er-er, Booker-er Washington.

Mammy. So he done fetch hisself a name out of his own head, Booker does! Yassum. But 'twarn't very long 'twill Booker seed that warn't

INDELIBLE

no kind of a school. Bimeby didn't he know most all that the teacher knowed. But Booker he'd heard tell of a puffekly grand big school called Hampton, five hundred miles away. But *he* ain't minding five hundred miles! Ain't he got feet? Ain't he got legs? Well, he jess walks and walks and walks and walks. 'Deed he does!

[*Shadow Scene VII:*

[*Booker is seen walking,—really only marks time. He has a stick over his shoulder with a small bundle tied on the end. Finally lies down to sleep. A row of hassocks a little behind him will elevate the various foot-passengers who must presently be projected on the sheet, walking over him.*]

Mammy. And bimeby, when night come, Booker he lay hisself down wheresoever he am. Yassum. And onct, honey, in the city of Richmond, Virginny, I declare to goodness if Booker don't hide hisself away under a wooden sidewalk, honey, and folkses walk round on top of him all night long! 'Deed they do! I spect they'd be flabbergasted to know how Booker am under there. Yassum. Well, bimeby, honey, Booker kivers all them five hundred long miles and he knocks on the door of Hampton. Listen! Reckon you kin hear him!

[*Shadow Scene VIII:*

[*Is really a continuation of Scene VII, for Booker has been seen walking along until he approaches an imaginary door at which he*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

knocks in pantomime, some one else making the actual sound for him. A teacher is seen at the door before him. Pantomime of her refusal to admit him—shakes her head; Booker pleads; teacher relents and points to floor, Booker nods eagerly. Pantomime of Booker sweeping room with broom; then dusting it. Delight of teacher, who shakes hands with him and leads him away with her.]

Mammy. [Explaining what is happening:]
But land sakes, Booker am so drefful dirty and raggedy, that when the teacher seed him standing there first on one foot, then on the other, she ain't 'tracted to him. "Hampton am full up," says she; "there ain't anudder spare inch of room," says she; "I guess you'se got to walk back to the place you come from, boy," says she. But Booker, he ain't gwine to be turned off so easy. He plead so powerful hard that the teacher softens up a speck and says she reckons the rec'tation room am very dirty, suppose he goes clean it. Well, honey, he sweep that room once. He sweep that room twice. He sweep that room three times. Yassum! Then he *dust* that room once. He dust that room twice. He dust that room three times. Yassum; and then he dust that room four times, 'twill you couldn't find a speck ob dust as big as de end of a tiny needle, honey, and the corners am as clean as the middle of the floor. Well, that teacher she smile all over her face. "You come in and stay," says she. And that's the how Booker 'tended school at Hampton. Reckon there was a right smart lot of

INDELIBLE

things Booker learned. Reckon Booker ain't neber seed *sheets* before, honey. First night he sleep on *top* of both sheets. But that ain't right. So next night he sleep *under* both sheets. But that ain't right, neither. So bimeby he jess lie *between* them sheets, all the same as white folkses do. Yassum. Oh, Booker had a peck of things to learn, but he am right smart, and bimeby he got hisself so full up wid knowledge that he gradyated all the same as you jess gradyated from your colly, honey. A gent'man done hand Booker Washington a dippyloma tied round the middle wid ribbon jess like your dippyloma, honey. . . .

[*Shadow Scene IX:*

[*Young man in college cap and gown bowing as he is handed diploma by another man.*]

Mammy. So then Booker, he goes to teach in anudder lil school so as he could learn other black boys the things he got at Hampton hisself. But, honey, that school am full o' leaks. Yassum. The rain it leak through that roof on the head of young Mistah Booker Washington, but he ain't minding *leaks*. No, ma'am. He jess hoist a bumbershoot and go on teaching. . . .

[*Shadow Scene X:*

[*Young man stands teaching, open book in hand. Holds out one hand, palm upward as if to see whether water was really coming through. Glances upward, and shakes his head. Goes and gets an umbrella and raises it.*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Mammy. Yassum. He keep hisself dry wid one hand while he teach Black-As-Ink boys wid the other hand, 'twill bimeby that school got a nice roof. Yassum. And bimeby it growed 'twill it needed anudder building, then *anudder* building, then anudder and anudder. 'Peared like that school jess natcherly couldn't stop growing, 'twill it growed bigger'n Hampton. Topsy, tell your ole Mammy Liza Jane what Mistah Washington's school am called?

Topsy. [*Turning around.*] Tuskegee Institute!

Nan. [*Also turning.*] Oh, I love Booker Washington! He wouldn't let poverty matter. He wouldn't let color matter. He wouldn't let ignorance matter. He wouldn't let leaks matter. He wouldn't let race prejudice matter. He overcame every single obstacle, didn't he? If only all the colored folks would copy him!

Mammy. Why, honey chile, we *does* copy him! I been keeping my eye on the Good Book this live-long time, and right here I reads all about Mistah Washington, 'deed I does: "Ye are our epistle known and read of all men," says the Bible. [*She adjusts her spectacles to read the verse, then lowers them to the end of her nose again.*] Well, ain't Mistah Booker Washington jess like God's 'pissle to all us Black-As-Ink folks? Yassum. A 'pissle am jess a letter, honey; and what am a letter but a scrap of white paper wid draps of black ink on it? Honey, you'se the white paper, me and Topsy's the draps of black ink! We'se all writing a new chapter of God's Bible ebery blessed day we lives.

INDELIBLE

Yassum. And what's more, you can't erase it, honey!

Nan. [*Springing to her feet impulsively, faces the audience:*] Indelible! Indelible! Oh, surely you and I aren't satisfied with all the chapters we have written. Ten million other Booker Washingtons are living in our nation at this very moment—poverty is nothing: for one Booker Washington had pluck enough to overcome it. Ignorance is nothing: for one Booker Washington had pride enough to overcome it. But when it comes to prejudice, race prejudice . . . Mammy, won't you read your favorite verse in all the Bible?

Mammy. [*Settling her spectacles on her nose, reads:*] "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though He be not far from every one of us."

Topsy. [*Nodding wisely.*] Though—He—be—not—far—from—every—one—of—us.

Nan. [*Praying.*] Dear Father, Thou who art not far from any one of us, black or white, yellow or brown, speak to our hearts this night and remind each of us anew that:

"We are writing the gospels a chapter a day,
In the deeds that we do and the words that we
say."

Help each of us to say to himself, right now:
"Pray, what is the gospel according to *me*?" Oh,

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

God, Thou who dost love all mankind alike, forgive us for our blind race prejudice and help us each to be living epistles of Thy own race brotherhood. For Jesus' sake, Amen."

[As she stands in prayer, it would be a very effective ending to have voices behind the sheet sing one of the Negro spirituals: "It's Me, O Lord," or "Deep River," etc.]

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE TELEPHONE BOOK

ONE SCENE; FOUR CHARACTERS; FOUR SPEAKING
PARTS

THE CAST:

Central.

Miss Nicetown. (*Use the name of your own city for this character, of course. Have American flag very prominent.*)

Miss Orient, *draped in some kind of Oriental costume.*

Trouble Chief.

SUGGESTIONS:

All statistics in this exercise must be changed to fit the actual statistics in the town where the play is to be given. Even if there is a classified supplement in the back of your Telephone Book, be sure to consult a city directory and other city official lists, since hospital nurses, dentists, oculists, physicians, etc., in free clinics and dispensaries often have no separate telephones, and the whole idea of the play is to compare accurately the medical status of your town with that of your denomination in all its mission stations. This will probably be a startling disclosure, as was the case in Rochester, New York, where this play was first

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

given a few years ago, and where the actual figures (those given here) were compared with those of the Baptist denomination at that date. For denominational data consult an annual report from each of your mission boards, or write directly to the Board room headquarters to enquire.

It would be ideal if Miss Nicetown could occupy one end of a gallery and Miss Orient the other end, each with a telephone receiver. Lacking a gallery, it will be quite possible to set up church dinner tables to form extra "stands"—two tables at the corner of the room at the left of the platform, two other tables in the corner of the room at the right of the platform. Place a rug on each pair of tables, also a chair, a very small table with a telephone on it. "Central" is seated behind a table on the platform, and has the regulation telephone girl's apparatus over her head, fillet-style. Behind her sits the Trouble Chief, busily jotting down facts in his notebook. There is no necessity for memorizing the speeches, since all the players may have their parts written down on the papers on which they are supposedly noting their discoveries.

[*Bell rings.*]

Central. Number, please.

Miss Nicetown. Hello, please give me Information.

Central. This is Information, madam.

Miss Nicetown. Oh, is it? Well, could you tell me how many physicians there are in Nicetown?

Central. Hold the line a minute, Lady, and I'll look it up in the classified directory in the back of

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE TELEPHONE BOOK

the telephone book. [*She reaches for the book, thumbs the pages, counts semi-audibly—"one—ten—twenty-seven—eighty-nine—one hundred and nineteen," etc.*] Hello. Madam, there are 434 physicians and surgeons listed here.

Miss Nicetown. Four hundred and thirty-four, thank you. [*Writes it down.*] And have you a list of osteopaths?

Central. Osteopaths? Yes, just a minute. [*Counts again, running her finger down the list.*] Thirteen osteopaths.

Miss Nicetown. Thirteen, thank you. And now, how about chiropractors?

Central. One moment. . . . Thirty-six chiropractors, Madam.

Miss Nicetown. Thirty-six. Could you find out about oculists and opticians?

Central. Certainly; hold the wire . . . forty-three opticians.

Miss Nicetown. And dentists, please?

Central. Sure! But it's some list, Lady; just a second while I count. [*Counts.*] One hundred and ninety-four dentists, and then there's the Free Dental Dispensary, you know.

Miss Nicetown. One hundred and ninety-four dentists. Yes, I've got that down. And now, how about drug stores?

Central. [*Counting.*] Ninety.

Miss Nicetown. How about hospitals?

Central. There are sixteen hospitals, Madam.

Miss Nicetown. Have you any idea how many nurses?

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Central. Trained nurses, both in and out of hospitals—six hundred and thirty-two, Lady.

Miss Nicetown. Thank you, Information, you have certainly been very obliging. [*Puts down the telephone.*] I believe I'll let Nicetown know how well off it is in a medical way! [*Holds up a large and clearly printed sign, cut out in the shape of an enormous pill bottle, with a brown cork. Along the length of the bottle appear the eight lines of statistics given above.*]

[*Bell rings.*

Central. Number, please.

Miss Orient. Please give me the Trouble Clerk.

Central. This is the Trouble Clerk, Madam; what seems to be wrong?

Miss Orient. Oh, I'm trying to put through a long distance call from the Orient, but you get my line crossed with Nicetown.

Central. *Ex-cuse* it, please!

Miss Orient. Oh, yes, I suppose I'll *have* to excuse it, for I'm always having to excuse you people in America. And if I'm not excusing you, I'm waiting to hear from you; so now I want to complain a little. . . .

Central. Certainly, Madam. I will report your trouble to the Trouble Chief in writing. What seems to be the matter?

Miss Orient. Well, I'm 'phoning for the —— denomination. Tell the Trouble Chief that in South India the ——s have been given six million people to evangelize, educate, and doctor; yet so far these ——s have sent us only fourteen

doctors, seven hospitals and twelve dispensaries. For six million persons, imagine! That makes one doctor for every 430,000 Hindus in a land where famine and cholera and plague are continually raging. I guess there are 430,000 persons living in Nicetown altogether, are there not, but how many doctors have they?

Central. Four hundred and thirty-four doctors, Madam, and that doesn't include dentists or oculists or osteopaths. And we have sixteen hospitals for about 300,000 persons.

Miss Orient. Sixteen? Oh, I can't believe it, and we have only seven for six *million* people! It isn't fair! It isn't fair!

Central. [*Agrees with agitated movements of her head.*] I'm making a note of it, Lady.

Miss Orient. Then include Africa too. For along the Congo River the ——s are the only people responsible for 500,000 Africans, yet they have only six doctors and a few hospitals. Suppose Nicetown were set down on top of the equator with the temperature around 110°, and no Board of Health to inspect plague centers and only six doctors to cure all the tropical malaria, all the fevers, all the sleeping sickness of 500,000 persons, what would Nicetown do?

Central. Do? Well, if I know Nicetown, it would kick, Lady! It wouldn't stand for such a risky situation, no, sir! Anything more? [*Writing diligently.*]

Miss Orient. More? Oh, I should say so! Only two —— hospitals in South China among

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

millions of people looking to that denomination for care, only two hospitals in West China for an even larger population dependent on us. Please say that our doctors out here are simply swamped with patients, overworked to the point of breaking. I could go on this same way about Burma and Assam and the Philippines, but suppose you just sum it all up by reporting that forty-six —— medical missionaries and twenty-six —— hospitals are not enough for the millions upon millions of persons left to —— care. Just add that over here a physician is all the surgeon we have, all the dentist we have, all the oculist, and even all the drugstore. [*She holds up an enormous pill bottle sign containing her statistics.*]

Central. [*Shaking her head, sadly.*] I'll report it, Madam, and—God bless you! [*Hands her report to the Trouble Chief behind her.*]

Trouble Chief. [*Reads the report, stroking his chin thoughtfully, pursing his lips, frowning with perplexity.*] ——s are expecting too much of forty-six medical missionaries, it's plain to be seen! [*Rises and goes to the edge of the platform, saying:*] Oh, —— men and women! Oh, —— boys and girls! I ask you, is it fair that we should have so much and that they should have so little? In the name of the Great Physician who is touched with every feeling of our infirmities I call on you to read aloud with me the gospel according to the Telephone Book. [*Audience reads the Nicetown sign at which he points first, and then the Orient sign. Allowing a significant pause to intervene,*

the Trouble Chief again points first at Nicetown sign as he says:] Freely ye have received, [then at Orient sign:] freely give, for the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.

[At this point in the program, a number of little Primary girls dressed as nurses (in Red Cross caps and stiff white aprons) should come into the room carrying empty blue cartons in which absorbent cotton is bought. The cartons should be full of little cardboard pill-bottles which the nurses pass to the audience, also pencils so that pledges for medical mission work may be made. Paint the corks brown, and paste a Dennison red-edged gummed label in the center of each bottle, printing in the label some such phrase as: "First Aid to the Injured," or, "An Ounce of Prevention—A Pound of Cure," etc. Even if you do not wish to take a Thank offering distribute the pill-bottles and pencils so that the audience may copy off the statistics as souvenirs to take home and discuss!]

PAIN STREET

A PAGEANT OF MEDICAL MISSIONS IN FIVE PARTS;
THIRTY OR MORE CHARACTERS; ELEVEN PRIN-
CIPAL SPEAKING PARTS

THE CAST:

The Angel of Pain.

The Angel of Paradise.

Chinese grandfather.

Chinese grandmother.

Chinese mother.

Chinese grandson, *little boy about six years old.*

Three Chinese granddaughters,—*six, eight, ten
years old.*

Chinese doctor.

Missionary nurse.

Hindu mother-in-law.

Four Hindu daughters-in-law.

Hindu son, *the husband of one of the daughters-
in-law.*

Medical missionary, *a woman.*

Seven Africans,—*four men, three women.*

African witch doctor.

African Chief.

Medical missionary, *a man.*

INVITATIONS, POSTERS, PROGRAMS:

Small cardboard pill bottles may be cut from

PAIN STREET

white cardboard. Color the cork brown and paste a red-bordered Dennison gummed label in the center of each bottle, with the words "Pain Street" on the label. On the back of the bottle should be the date, place, price, etc. Somewhat larger pill-bottles may be used for programs, a red-edged label in front, the list of scenes in back, e.g.:

PAIN STREET
Prologue.
Pain Street in China.
Pain Street in India.
Pain Street in Africa.
Epilogue.

For a poster you will, of course, wish to form a street of several houses,—one a tip-roofed Chinese house, one a mud hut from India, and one an African hut, pasted side by side with palm-trees between, and at the end a sign-post. This should be cut on a double fold of heavy tan paper, for when it is opened one arm of the sign may be pasted flat against the poster reading:

To
PAIN STREET

The other arm is to jut out at right angles toward the reader, and should also say: "To Pain Street."

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

PROLOGUE

The parting of the curtain should disclose a group of sick persons in Oriental costumes (these may be the same characters later to appear in the India scene) lying on the floor, or leaning on their elbows, or half sitting, forming a tableau of the pictures frequently seen of the sick who came to our Lord to be cured at sunset time. A soft rose-colored light should illumine the group. No words are to be spoken as the light grows gradually dimmer and dimmer; when the platform is barely distinguishable the Angel of Pain walks through the group, her hands outspread in blessing; then, reaching the edge of the platform sings (to tune "Hursley," with great expression), or stands while some unseen singer sings:

"At even e'er the sun was set
The sick, oh, Lord, around Thee lay,
Oh, in what divers pains they met,
Oh, with what joy they went away."

[The platform is now dark, so the curtain may be drawn behind the Angel who continues singing, while the next scene is quietly prepared.]

"Once more 'tis eventide, and we
Oppressed with various ills, draw near,
What if Thy form we cannot see,
We know and feel that Thou art here.

PAIN STREET

And none, oh, Lord, have perfect rest,
For none are wholly free from sin;
And they who fain would love Thee best,
Are conscious most of wrong within.

O Saviour Christ, our woes dispel,
For some are sick, and some are sad,
And some have never loved Thee well,
And some have lost the love they had.

O Saviour Christ, Thou too art Man;
Thou hast been troubled, tempted, tried;
Thy kind but searching glance can scan
The very wounds that shame would hide!

Thy touch has still its ancient power;
No word from Thee can fruitless fall;
Here in this solemn evening hour,
And in Thy mercy heal us all. Amen."

Angel of Pain. And lo, it came to pass as the Angel of Pain passed along the Pain Streets of the world that she longed to open the Book of Life and read to all men everywhere [*opens a Bible and reads with impressive interpretation:*] "In those days they brought the sick unto Jesus and He laid His hands upon them and cured them of all their diseases. And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them to Jesus saying, Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another? And in the same hour Jesus cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

unto many that were blind He gave sight. Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard: how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them." Moreover, on the same day in which the Great Physician ascended into heaven He said to His disciples: "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father."

But the Angel of Pain shut the Book of Life with a great sigh, crying: "Oh, Thou great God of men and angels, where are these *greater works* which thou didst prophecy? For lo, I pass along an endless street of pain throughout the world each day, yet where, oh, Lord, is he who works Thy miracles? Where is he who give the blind their sight or helps the lame man walk?" Then in His infinite patience the Great Physician led me through the darkest places of the world, until behold! in far dim corners and in lowly hovels I found God's ministers of mercy—alas, too few in number, yet working day and night as if they heard the voice of Him who said to those upon His right hand: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." Now one of these houses on Pain Street was located in China. [*Angel of Pain draws the curtains disclosing:*]

PAIN STREET

PAIN STREET IN CHINA

where a Chinese family of mother, grandfather, grandmother, and several little children, are gathered around a little boy lying on a couch or cot (it really should be a brick bed!) covered with some oriental sort of covering.

[The Angel of Pain walks over, and laying her hand on the little boy's red-speckled face, explains to the audience:] In this Chinese house on Pain Street the family were in great distress because the little son and heir was nearly dead with smallpox.

Mother. *[To the Angel.]* But at first we did not realize it was Heavenly Blossoms. We thought it was a little demon in him, such as children bring home with them when they foolishly gather flowers at sunset time. For when the flowers close their petals the little demons have no place to sleep, and try in every way to creep indoors. I snatched the flowers from Kom Loi's hands *[demonstrates]* and tossed them out the doorway, crying: *[comes to edge of platform throwing away imaginary flowers.]* Bad luck go out! Good luck come in!

Grandfather. Yes, but she didn't do it right, the stupid creature! My son's wife has no brains, alas! But I am a man of education and learning, and I could plainly see that the demon was still lodged in my grandson, so I did what I thought was wisest. *[He winks at his family, inclining his head in a self-satisfied fashion, as he paints a Chinese character in black on the child's cheek.]* I

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

dipped a brush in some ink and painted the word "tiger" on his cheek,—see, like this! For if there is any one thing that frightens a little demon almost to pieces it is that one dreadful word "*tiger!*"

Grandmother. Yes, but alas! alas! It did not frighten this particular wicked demon! But I felt sure that a loud noise would make him want to hurry away, so we all took tin pans and brass kettles and beat them,—like this!

[The entire family snatch up metal utensils and clash them with as noisy a din as possible. A little granddaughter, leaning over to see what effect this cure is having, suddenly points frantically at the boy's cheek. The entire family stop their noisy clatter to bend over the couch.]

Grandmother. No wonder noise did not drive the demon out, for suddenly one of my little granddaughters discovered that poor Kom Loi was covered with "heavenly blossoms." And yet we thought we had been so clever in making the Smallpox Goddess skip our house, didn't we?

Mother. [*Eagerly.*] Oh, yes, it was a little trick I thought of, myself; for it was quite simple to be seen that, household by household, the Smallpox Goddess was scattering heavenly blossoms all up and down our street. So I had the loveliest idea! Oh, the brightest idea! Wasn't it really clever of me to think of that trick?

[The family all wag their heads in assent.]

Grandmother. You see, the smallpox demons had already visited our neighbors, next door, for

PAIN STREET

all their little sons and daughters were completely peppered with the big red heavenly blossoms; so my son's wife said to our neighbor: "Alas, the demons will be visiting our house next, as soon as they find there is a nice little unspeckled son under our roof-tree. But I could fool them if you would only lend me one of your little sick boys to sleep in my son's bed to-night!"

[The family snicker behind their hands at the cleverness of the trick.]

Grandmother. Wasn't that a clever idea? A little borrowed child in our house, already spotted with red blossoms, while our own little Kom Loi slept next door with our neighbor's other children. Oh, we thought we had the demons pretty well mystified, didn't we?

[The family wag their heads mournfully.]

Grandfather. *[Scratching his head.]* Yet somehow or other, in spite of the clever plan, it didn't work. For see! Kom Loi came home from our neighbors covered from top to toe with red speckles. So then I went to the temple of the Smallpox Goddess to tie red rags on her shrine, for she is very, very fond of red—it pleases her so much that I hoped she might be good to Kom Loi, but alas! alas! the precious boy grew sicker than ever; so then I sent for the honorable Wise Man of Medicine. *[Goes to the door and ushers in the Chinese doctor who wears large dark-rimmed goggle glasses and a skull cap with a globular red button on top.]* You can see for yourself what a venerable man of knowledge he is.

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Chinese Doctor. [*Pompously seats himself, opens a large black box and removes several unusually long needles—either steel knitting needles or crochet hooks or headless hatpins will make the best effect on the audience! The Doctor sorts these over, testing the sharpness of the points, eventually choosing the longest. Then, clearing his throat impressively and stretching his arms as if about to need plenty of room for the display of muscle, he says in a deep booming voice:*] Ahem! Little demons that lodge in the body need an exit, so I will now proceed to punch a few holes to assist their escape. Ahem! It may interest you to know that after twenty years of practice I have mastered this difficult art of puncturing and know over a thousand spots in the human body where I can jab my needle without necessarily killing the patient. If some one will now hold the little boy's feet and some one else his arms, I will proceed.

[*Grandfather holds Kom Loi's feet; Grandmother holds his arms. The Doctor then leans over and proceeds to poke his long needle apparently into the child's body. An almost too realistic effect may be gained by actually slipping it in the crevice between the arm and the chest. Kom Loi should immediately let out terrible screams and struggle to get up. The grandparents hold him down. The rest of the family look on with their clasped hands held spellbound over their lips, the mother buries her face in her hands.*]

PAIN STREET

Doctor. [*Replacing needle in his box.*] Well, that should certainly frighten the demons out! I imagine you will have the little boy perfectly well by morning. [*Rises, bows, and starts toward the door.*]

Grandmother. Venerable Sir, do you not honorably think that it might be well to concoct some very stiff medicine to make our miserable grandson strong once more?

Doctor. [*Pompously reseating himself, peers at the boy over the tops of his glasses.*] Medicine? Certainly! Certainly! Just as you wish! [*Again opens his black box; removes small brass bowl and a stone to use as a grinder. Then, as he mentions the various articles, he takes something similar in appearance from his box, e.g., brown glove fingers make excellent lizards; brown wool for grasshoppers, etc.*] Let me see, now, let me see! Yes, I will use one, two, three, four salted lizards—here they go into the bowl. And one, two, three, four, five, six dried grasshoppers; one bird's claw; a little powdered tiger's bone—that is very strengthening, sir! [*"Oh, yes, Excellency, very strengthening!" grandfather murmurs.*] And now, undoubtedly your honorable son has been devoted enough to have your coffin in the house ready for you, so could I trouble you to bring me seven rusty coffin nails? [*The grandfather whispers to little granddaughter. She leaves the room, returning with seven nails.*] I find it very beneficial for small boys to have a little mud from the middle of the fireplace [*Mother says: "Let me get it!" Returns*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

with little lump of clay] and a piece of the grandmother's fingernail is also excellent. [*He hands the grandmother a small knife.*] Here is a knife to use in paring it off, Old Lady. [*After all these ingredients are in the bowl, the Doctor solemnly grinds and grinds and grinds, the family watching him with rapt attention, each hand tucked up the opposite sleeve, Chinese style. After a speechless moment of this pulverizing, he should begin molding the powder, wetting his fingers in his mouth occasionally, then removes four or five big brown cough-drops previously hidden in the bowl, handing them to the mother:]* Here they are—pills stiff enough to chase away twenty little demons and bring strength to twenty little boys. [*Arises; bows.*] May he live to be a thousand times ten thousand years of age. [*Exit.*]

Mother. [*To Angel.*] You can see for yourself what stiff magic that was; but even when all five of the pills were swallowed Kom Loi was weaker than ever. We could hardly hear him breathe. We thought he was dead! Then I was really desperate, for I saw that he had lost one of his three souls and that it must be wandering around in a lonely way looking for a home to spend the night. So I took one of Kom Loi's little red satin jackets outdoors at sunset time and waved it and waved it. [*Steps to edge of platform with the little jacket, waving it with both hands and calling softly, enticingly:]* Come back, little lost soul, oh, do come back! Come back, little lost soul, come back! Come back!

PAIN STREET

Grandmother. But I said to her, "You'd better call louder than *that!*"

Family. [*Nodding, echo forlornly:*] Yes, call louder! Call louder!

Mother. [*Louder, with even more yearning.*] Come back, little lost soul! Come back! Come back! [*Holds the jacket against her heart, then gives it a last feeble wave as she calls softly:*] Come back, little lost soul! Oh, do, do, come back!

Missionary Nurse. [*In costume of blue uniform, white apron and cap, hurries down the aisle from back of auditorium to the platform steps which she climbs. Putting her arm around the mother's shoulder, she says:*] Is some one sick in your house? I am here in China to help you—

[*Together they walk over to the couch, and the nurse has begun her work as*

Angel of Pain. [*Drawing the curtains, steps in front, saying gently:*] You do not regret seeing your trained nurse enter this home, I know. But, oh, the pity of it, that Pain Street in China stretches far and wide through all that vast dense population of four hundred million souls, where small-pox, plague and famine break forth in unexpected places every day, with idolatry and quackery and superstition the only Chinese cure; and always, everywhere, the lame, the halt, the blind! How *can* one hundred Christian doctors and their few trained nurses meet all this staggering need? And yet in solemn truth I tell you that, in households such as this which you have seen, your nurse is not too hurried in her rush of pro-

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

phylactic sanitation and last-moment vaccination to speak of Jesus Christ who sent her there! So that from homes where busy doctors follow in the footsteps of the Great Physician you may hear a hymn of great contentment rising:

[Unseen singers, behind the curtain.

“Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee;
Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my want and into Thy wealth;
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee.”

PAIN STREET IN INDIA

Angel of Pain. [As soon as the hymn is finished:] In my daily walk down the Pain Streets of the world I linger long in India; and always, any day, in any village, I can see a sight like this. But just because it happens in the zenana of a high caste household, do not forget that even worse takes place in humbler homes!

[Angel parts the curtains, disclosing a group of four women draped in soft-colored cheesecloth saris kneeling around a fifth white-haired woman lying on the floor.]

First Daughter-in-Law. [Stooping to feel the sick woman's forehead.] She is burning up with heat and her eyes look glazed. She actually does not seem to know us.

PAIN STREET

Second Daughter-in-Law. [*Sniffing, and tossing her head with disgust, as she fans herself.*] It's just as I said from the beginning—she's possessed of evil spirits! Any one with half an eye can see it!

First Daughter-in-Law. Hoity-toity, you little new upstart! That's no way to be talking about your mother-in-law.

Second Daughter-in-Law. Indeed? And who are you to tell me how to behave? Anyhow, she can't hear a single word we say, can she? See—I clap my hands right in her ears. [*Claps hands.*] But she never even blinks an eyelash. And anyhow, I don't have to be so careful of my words as some people I know! [*Significantly points a forefinger at the First Woman.*] You aren't exactly the favorite wife of the favorite son, you know. [*Laughs scornfully, and arranges the bracelets on her arm.*] How does it feel to be a perfect nuisance to have around, anyhow?

First Daughter-in-Law. [*Looking somewhat crestfallen.*] Some day maybe you won't be a favorite, either, you simpering bundle of conceit! You nasty little cat! You—

Third Daughter-in-Law. Tut! Tut! Stop your foolish bickering. Here's our mother-in-law possessed of evil spirits. We ought to be doing something.

Fourth Daughter-in-Law. The best thing to do is to shake them out. Like this—let me show you.

First Daughter-in-Law. [*Pushing her back.*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Nobody asked your advice! I was just about to shake her, myself. You'll admit that I'm the oldest daughter-in-law, so surely it's my right to attend to these matters for the old lady. For as mothers-in-law go, she's a very good sort and I'd do a good deal for her. [*Leaning over:*] My, she certainly is weak! We mustn't let this continue. [*Takes the old lady by the shoulders and shakes her with more apparent than actual vigor, of course, until she sits back on her heels breathless, just able to pant:*] Well, that's . . . about . . . all . . . I . . . have . . . breath . . . for. . . .

Second Daughter-in-Law. [*Disdainfully fanning herself.*] Some people I know are all words! [*In goody-goody falsetto voice:*] "She's a very good mother-in-law and I'd do a great deal for her." Ahem! And look at you, now! [*Points her fan scornfully at the resting, breathless woman.*]

Third Daughter-in-Law. Keep quiet, you saucy little piece of baggage; I should say it was your turn to do something for the old lady!

Second Daughter-in-Law. Oh, is it, indeed? Well, she can die for all I care. Shake her yourself!

Third Daughter-in-Law. I will, you undutiful creature! [*She leans over and shakes the old woman, then sinks back exhausted, panting:*] I . . . should . . . think . . . that . . . would . . . shake . . . out . . . the . . . evil . . . spirits. . . .

Fourth Daughter-in-Law. I tell you what I think, I think it's terrible of us to let her sleep; for it's always in sleep that evil spirits steal away

PAIN STREET

a person's breath until they die. I'm going to make some strong black coffee for her to drink.
[*Exit.*]

Third Daughter-in-Law. And heat a coin red-hot so that we can burn her arm, then the pain of it will keep her awake.

Second Daughter-in-Law. [*Suddenly becomes animated.*] Meantime, I'll clap my hands in her ears. [*Leans over and claps her hands, calling:*] Keep awake! Keep awake! You'll die if you go to sleep! [*To the others:*] How about some red pepper? Once when my brother had the plague we kept him awake for days at a time by blowing hot pepper-powder in his face, not only did he sneeze violently but it made his eyelids sting and his throat was so raw that he *couldn't* sleep!

Third Daughter-in-Law. That's really a very good idea. I'll get some pepper. [*Hurries to one corner of room, returning with imaginary powder in her hand which she blows in the old lady's face. The mother-in-law sneezes feebly.*]

[*The three women nod at each other, satisfied.*]

There you see! It worked. [*They repeat the experiment; more faint sneezing. First daughter-in-law shakes the old lady again.*]

[*Enter Fourth Daughter-in-Law with cup of coffee.*]

This is as strong and as hot as I could make it. [*Lifts the old lady's head and forces the liquid down her throat. Then returns with the red hot coin held gingerly in a piece of doubled cloth. She burns*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

the old lady's arm. They bend anxiously over her.]
Poor old woman! She looks worse to me!

Second Daughter-in-Law. [Yawns luxuriously, arms outspread. Then fans herself.] She's being a nuisance, isn't she?

[The others look at her in complete disgust:]
You shameless creature! *[They repeat their remedies—shaking, burning, coffee, pepper.]*

First Daughter-in-Law. [Beating her breast and wailing.] Alas! Alas! She is not long for this world!

Third Daughter-in-Law. [Beating her breast and wailing.] Oh, alas! Alas! She is as good as dead already, but we have done what we could!

Fourth Daughter-in-Law. [Swaying from side to side in grief.] Alas! Alas! The gods have forsaken her. But we have done what we could! *[All three of them chant, beating their breasts and swaying in an abandon of Oriental grief.]* We have done what we could! We have done what we could! We have done what we could!

[Enter the son wearing white coat, broad red girdle around his hips, white turban on his head.]

Women, be still! What does this wild mourning mean?

Women. *[Still swaying, each saying a different thing.]* Salaam, oh, Master, your mother is almost dead! Oh, Master, is it not a plague of some kind? But we have done what we could!

[His young wife rises, flirtatiously touches his arm with her fan, simpering up at him.]

PAIN STREET

Son. [Shoves her aside impatiently with a flick of his hand; stoops over to examine his mother; nods as he rises.] Ah, yes, I have heard of this plague; men call it influenza. But down in the bazaar there is a barber who knows a cure for it—they tell me he cuts a hole in the top of the head, puts poison in the hole, then plasters it over with lime.

Women. [Clasping hands in admiration.] Oh, that would surely be wonderful. [Then bending over the old lady:] But there is not a moment to lose; she is getting weaker and weaker.

Son. [Hurrying to the door.] I will get the barber at once! Keep her awake till I come back! [Exit.]

Women. [Clapping their hands and chanting rhythmically.] Do not sleep! Oh, do not sleep! It is in sleep that mortals die! Do not sleep! Do not sleep!

[Down the aisle from the back of the auditorium comes an American woman doctor, wearing a pith sun-hat if possible, and carrying an open umbrella in one hand, a doctor's case in the other. She hurries up on the platform, closing her umbrella before she reaches the group.]

Doctor. I heard that your family had sickness; I have come to do what I can. [Takes off her hat, opens her medicine case, and kneels beside the old lady.]

Angel of Pain. [Drawing the curtains, steps in front of them, saying:] Oh, the little brown women

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

of India,—so tired and so ignorant. You have had this brief glimpse, but there are a hundred million others—frail old women burning up with fevers, or feeble child wives bearing children. Yes, the Street of Pain in India moves us all to deep compassion, with its million lepers begging by the crossroads and its million puny babies wailing round the door-sills. Don't you wonder what a single doctor ever does amid such multitudes in trouble? And yet in solemn truth I tell you that, in households such as this which you have seen, these Christian women doctors never cure a sin-sick body but they also try to cure its sin-sick soul, until from hut to hut along Pain Street in India you may hear to-day a hymn arising . . . hark! [*Puts finger on lips.*]

Unseen singers:

“Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress to jubilant psalm,
Jesus, I come to Thee.”

During the hymn hastily prepare for

PAIN STREET IN AFRICA

Angel of Pain. But when we come to darkest Africa, Pain Street is one long jungle path of igno-

PAIN STREET

rance and superstition. I give you just one fleeting glimpse—a tribal chief lies dying and the tribal Witch Doctor is doing what the Africans call “smelling out the victim,” for they feel quite confident that some one’s evil eye has cast a spell upon the chief and caused his fatal illness. So you will see how it is the Witch Doctor’s business to grow so frenzied that he can, by inspiration, smell out the victim’s name. [*She opens the curtains, disclosing a scene in Africa.*]

[*Both the auditorium and the platform should be dark for this scene, which is to be lighted only by a small camp fire made in the center of the stage. Pile faggots and logs of wood (or umbrellas wrapped in brown crêpe paper!) on top of an electric light bulb or two. Tongues of red and orange tissue paper, cut flame shape, should come licking out from between the logs in a very realistic fashion. The light from the bulbs must be sufficient to illuminate the blackened faces. Tall palms in the background will add local color to this jungle scene.*]

[*Be sure to allow nothing comic in the grotesque appearance of the players (or even in their minds!) for this pageant is a prayer and not merely an entertainment. The Witch Doctor should wear long black tights and long black stockings with rubbers or sneakers inside the stockings. Long black gloves on his hands and arms will be less trouble than*

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

blackening them. A number of fur collars may be used as pelts to dangle around his waist. Feathers in his hair will also add the necessary savage note, and noisy anklets of brass curtain rings should be tied around his ankles. A spear in one hand and a football rattle in the other will complete his outfit. The other Africans in the semi-circle facing the camp-fire should wear close-fitting black clothes and black gloves. Gaudy girdles twenty inches wide should be around their hips. Great brass curtain rings should dangle from their ears by invisible strings. Smaller rings can even be fastened to the nose by means of court-plaster. The more necklaces, the better. The sick Chief should be wrapped in an animal skin or a red blanket and lie quietly beside the fire, on the opposite side from the tribal semi-circle.

[The entire group should sway with a rhythmic guttural pathos, a sound resembling "oom-a! oom-a! oom-a!" as the curtain parts, and continue it as the Witch Doctor starts his slow dance round and round the prostrate Chief.]

The Witch Doctor. [Rattling his rattle as he dances quicker and quicker around the Chief, waving his spear and moaning "oom-a" in unison with the other Africans, until suddenly, after eight or nine such circlings, he swoops across to the semi-circle of on-lookers and pointing at a certain woman, shouts:] You! You are the victim! You cast an evil eye on the Chief! You bewitched him!

PAIN STREET

Woman. [*Shuddering and holding up her hands in horrified protest.*] No! No! Not I!

Group of Africans. [*Swaying, murmur to one another and point their long black arms at her.*] It is she who has bewitched our Chief!

Witch Doctor. [*Savagely shaking his rattle at her.*] Woman, come forth and take your trial by sasswood poison! Come forth, I say, for full well we know that if the poison kills you it will prove your guilt; while if you live, you prove your innocence. Come, here is the poison; take it! [*He unties a little cup from his belt, and forces it against her lips.*]

Woman. [*Pushing his hand back.*] No! No! I am not guilty!

Group of Africans. [*Swaying, murmuring.*] Oom-a! Oom-a!

African. [*Nearest the audience suddenly leans his head down until his ear is against the floor; listens; then lifting his head cries sharply:*] Hark, I hear the thud of human footsteps approaching! [*Points down the dark middle aisle of the auditorium.*] A torch light coming down the jungle path!

[*The Africans crane their necks to see. Down the pitch-dark aisle comes an American man dressed in either a white or a Palm Beach suit, carrying a primitive torch. This may be made by tying faggots together, putting orange and red tissue paper flames at the top to conceal a lighted Ever-Ready electric flashlight.*]

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

Africans. [Muttering excitedly to one another.] An enemy! From the tribe of enemies! [They suddenly hold their spears upright.]

Witch Doctor. [Neglecting his victim, begins to brandish his spear threateningly, as he peers forward.] Ah, a man from the tribe of white men! An enemy, indeed! We have never had speech with one of these white creatures before. We had better make short work of him. He is alone, so it will be easy.

One African. [Shouting excitedly.] I choose the white man's coat!

Another African. I'll take the white man's shoes!

Third African. No, no! I want those shoes myself.

[A babel of angry voices now begin to clamor for the shoes, gesticulating, some voices pitched high, some low, some guttural, all angry. The audience can only distinguish the word "shoes."]

[The Medical Missionary has now reached the platform.]

[Witch Doctor rushes at him with spear poised.]

Medical Missionary. [Holds up his right hand with quiet authority.] Is it thus that you greet the bringer of good news? Is it thus that you treat a man who has traveled all night through unknown jungle paths to save the life of your chief? See, I come in friendship, with no weapon!

Africans. [Murmur in chorus, nodding their heads.] The white man comes in friendship with

PAIN STREET

no weapon—oom-a! oom-a! oom-a! That is good of the white man! He brings us good news!

[*The Medical Missionary kneels beside the body of the Chief, drawing a stethoscope from his pocket to listen to his heart-beats.*]

Angel of Pain. [*Drawing the curtain, stands before it, saying:*] Behold, the people that sit in darkness have seen a great light! The light of fearless ministry to those in deepest need, for Pain Street in Africa is a thoroughfare of utter woe, even as you saw just now,—the sufferer often lies neglected while an innocent by-stander is made the victim for the illness. But through the jungle paths a white man has been hastening here and there on the errands of the Great Physician, until to-day in savage jungle clearings you may hear a curious sound at even-tide— [*Puts finger on lip.*]

Unseen Singers:

“Out of unrest and arrogant pride,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;
Into Thy blessed will to abide,
Jesus, I come to Thee;
Out of myself to dwell in Thy love,
Out of despair into raptures above,
Upward for aye on wings like a dove,
Jesus, I come to Thee.”

Angel of Pain. So it shall come to pass in that great day when the King shall judge all men for their deeds upon the earth, that He shall gently say to those who followed in the footsteps of the Great Physician, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the earth, for I was sick, and ye visited me." Then shall those missionaries say: "Lord, when saw we *Thee* sick and visited Thee?" And the King shall answer: "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me."

[Epilogue: The curtain is now opened behind the Angel of Pain, who steps to one side of the platform, disclosing a really resplendent Angel of Paradise with a gold fillet in her hair and a gold girdle around her waist (Christmas tree tinsel is excellent) and great white tarlatan wings powdered with diamond dust. The platform is brightly lighted.]

Angel of Paradise. *[Unrolls a long white scroll and reads:]* And lo! a great multitude—which no man could number—of all nations—and kindreds—and peoples—and tongues—stood before the throne—and before the Lamb—clothed with white robes—and crying with a loud voice—"Salvation to our God—which sitteth upon the throne. Blessing—and glory—and wisdom—and thanksgiving—and honor—and power—and might—be unto our God—forever and ever. Amen."

Angel of Pain. *[Pointing down the middle aisle to a procession of white-robed characters just starting toward the platform.]* Who are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?

[If possible, this processional should include all the characters already in the cast, augmented

PAIN STREET

by as many more as you may wish. If the time is too short for the Africans to reach the rear of the auditorium and be draped in white ready to take their places in line at once, then several other persons should be substituted, their faces blackened. For there must be no least delay in the continuity, or the entire effect will be lost. Each person in the procession should be draped in two sheets, one front and one back, hanging gracefully from the shoulders where they are pinned in folds. A narrow girdle confines the fullness at the hips. A gold tinsel circlet may be around their heads.]

Angel of Paradise. [Reading from her scroll, impressively:] These are they—which come out of great tribulation—and have washed their robes—and made them white—in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they—before the throne of God—and serve Him day and night. They shall hunger no more—neither thirst any more—and God shall wipe away—all tears from their eyes; and there shall be—no more death; neither sorrow—nor crying; neither shall there be *any more pain*: for the former things are passed away.

Processional. [Singing to tune “Urbs Beata” or “Ewing,” as they file down the aisle and up on the platform:]

“Jerusalem, the golden
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice oppressed;

SHORT MISSIONARY PLAYS

I know not, oh, I know not,
What joys await us there;
What radiancy of glory!
What bliss beyond compare!

There is the throne of David,—
And there, from care released,
The song of them that triumph,
The shout of them that feast;
And they, who with their Leader,
Have conquered in the fight,
For ever and for ever
Are clad in robes of white.

Oh, sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
Oh, sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest:
Who art, with God the Father,
And Spirit, ever blest. Amen."

Angel of Paradise. [Stepping forward and taking the hand of the Angel of Pain, prays:] Oh, Thou Great Physician, Thou who art touched with every feeling of our infirmities, we bring to Thee to-night the pain of Thy world. Oh, move us with Thy own compassion, Lord, and quicken us with Thy own tenderness, that we may each fulfill Thy plan for us:—"Greater works than these shall ye do because I go to my Father."

PAIN STREET

Graciously bless all our medical missionaries and our trained nurses. Give them of Thine own skill and power. Oh, God, we thank Thee that it can be said of them as of Thyself that the blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them.

Through this coming day of overwork and untold pain, God, be merciful unto them and bless them and cause Thy face to shine upon them; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

CURTAIN

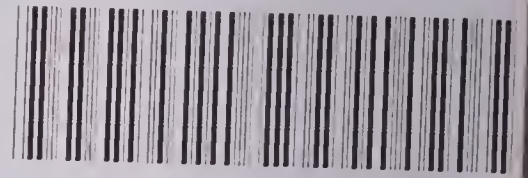
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 671 162 5